



はぐりく魔とま

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新刊 魔法少女の翼

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HATARAKU MAOUSAMA!
episode 0





弱小部族・黒羊族出身の悪魔だったが、知略と向上心でエンテ・イスラ征服まであと一歩と迫る。地球にやってきてからは、生活費を稼ぐためフリーターになり、正社員と世界征服を目指す。



鉄蠟族の総大将として巨大な軍勢を率いており、サタンの率いる勢力と激突する。その後、魔王サタンの忠臣として悪魔大元帥となる。地球でも主夫として真奥に仕える苦勞人。



荒野のハグレ悪魔として自由気ままに暮らしていたが、サタン達と行動を共にすることになる。真奥や芦屋を襲撃するために世塚の町にやってきたが、その後一流二トとして居候となる。



勇者として各地で悪魔を退治し、魔王討伐の旅をしていた。討伐寸前で逃げられた魔王を追い地球にやってきたが、貨幣経済に採まれテラポのバイトをしながら魔王を探す日々を送ることに。



エンテ・イスラの訂教審議官で真奥達を討伐しようとしていたが、今は料理の差し入れをしてくれる真奥達のお隣さん。

訂教審議官 クレステイアベル

鎌月鈴乃

遊佐恵美

漆原半蔵

芦屋四郎

真奥貞夫

悪魔大元帥ルシフェル

悪魔大元帥アルシエル

魔王サタン

勇者エミリア

佐々木千穂

真奥のバイト先の後置で、仕事のできる真奥に想いをよせる女子高生。真奥や恵美達の正体を知っても変わらぬ付き合いをしてくれる。

はなうらぐ魔界ま

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Short Story 1: Hataraku! Maou-sama tachi! – A long time ago-

はたらく魔王さま達！-a long time ago-



There was a unique air of nervousness whenever a call was received from the workplace, and what was intriguing, was that it was difficult to have a good feeling to the contents of the call.

If the call came during a holiday with clear skies, then all the more it would be such a situation.

The cool wind which held no traces of summer blew through Room 201 of Villa Rosa Sasazuka, the wooden apartment with sixty years of history, Maou Sadao pressed on the “call” button of his new phone with some anxiety.

“Hello, this is Maou, thank you for your hard work.”

Then from the other side of the phone, a reply carrying a stiff tone was transmitted.

When Maou took the call, his roommate and [loyal subject], a young man known as Ashiya Shiro, turned down the television’s volume with the remote control.

Maou thanked Ashiya with a gaze and then focused his attention on the phone, it seemed like his bad feeling was going to be fulfilled.

“Yes, yes.....Eh? Influenza?”

According to the manager, Kisasi Mayumi, of Maou's workplace at Tokyo, Shibuya area—the MgRonalds in front of Hatagaya station, it seemed like someone was unable to make it to work today.

“Even though I feel sorry for you since you had to work a few days in a row because of the newcomer's training, are you free to take over tonight's shift?”

Ever since Maou had to be in charge of a certain newcomer who just joined their store and was a special existence to Maou in various ways, he had accumulated a large amount of stress that he had never felt before.

Honestly speaking, he really wanted to make use of this rare off day to rest, but Maou still got rid of the fleeting evil thought he had in his heart and took out the current month's work schedule from a drawer in the corner to confirm the timing.

“.....No, if I was supposed to rest today, I think it would be better if I get to work latest by four-thirty? Or else there would be no time for the shift break, Kisasi-san also has to work until the dinner period.....yes, yes, I'll leave at four. No, there's not much choice if it's the influenza. Yes. 4 pm then. Yes, thank you for your hard work, alright.”

Maou informed the other party that he would be at work earlier than the time originally proposed before hanging up the phone.

“Are you going to work?”

“Seems like someone took medical leave due to influenza. That’s troublesome.”

Maou nodded with a wry smile as he answered Ashiya’s question.

“But look.”

Maou passed the work schedule to Ashiya for him to read.

“By sheer luck, Emi isn’t scheduled today.”

“Right.....”

Ashiya had mixed emotions when his ‘Master’ gave such a carefree smile.

Emilia Justina. Her name in Japan was Yusa Emi.

To Maou and Ashiya, she was an ‘archnemesis’ they could never get along with.

But after a series of setbacks, Emi has now become Maou’s ‘Junior’ and was his ‘Comrade’ working in the same shop.

For Maou who was in charge of handling his archnemesis's newcomer attachment, he actually said the depressing words of "I don't want to work" for the first time in his life. Fortunately, Emi was not working today.

Then again, the schedule never had Emi's name in the first place. After all, Emi was currently attending what can be termed in some way as an important family meeting which can affect the fate of the world. So even if she went to work, she might not be able to do the job properly.....

"It's been a while since I was able to work like I did before, I'll be leaving at 4pm."

"I understand. Then I will prepare some simple food before you head for work, may I know how you plan to settle your dinner?"

Ashiya raised his head to look at the clock, and started changing today's menu in his mind to accommodate for the change in schedule.

"I'll be back for dinner. It seems like they are only lacking help for the peak dinner period, there will be sufficient people for the period before closing time."

After Maou finished what he had to say, he got up and changed from the wrinkled T shirt he usually wears during his off days to the not-so-wrinkled polo T-shirt, and got into his working mode.

When the clock pointed towards four in the afternoon, Maou smartly walked out of the apartment, got onto his beloved steed that was parked in the backyard, the bicycle Dullahan II.

“Let’s go, Dullahan II! We’re going to solve the crisis in our store!”

Ashiya shouted at Maou’s retreating back, who was courageously ringing the bicycle bell and preparing to ride onto the pavement of Sasazuka street,

“Demon King-sama! Be careful on the road.”

Ashiya, who was preparing to return to the apartment after seeing off Maou who raised an arm in reply and quickly disappeared, stopped as he noticed a familiar figure walking towards the apartment from the direction where Maou left.

Ashiya walked down the common staircase of the apartment to check the mailbox as well as welcome that person.

“Hello, Sasaki-san.”

“Hello, Ashiya-san.”

Sasaki Chiho, who was currently studying at a high school, was Maou's junior at work. At the same time, she was one of the few Japanese people who knows about Maou, Ashiya and Emi's real identity.

Futhermore, even though she knew their true identity, she still held positive feelings towards Maou and searched for a future where all the people she knew can live harmoniously with each other. Therefore, this young girl can be said to be the key factor to holding the residents of this apartment together.

Chiho was holding a hand bag which she used very often. It probably contained the carefully handmade dishes which she prepared for Maou as well as the members who gather together at room 201.

“Actually Demon King-sama just....”

“Ah, he already went to cover our colleague's shift?”

Chiho was a step ahead.

“I received a message from Kisaki-san while I was at school today. Turns out that Ooki-san took leave today and she asked if I could cover her shift. But before I could reply, I received another mail saying that she already found another person to help. So I guessed the situation was probably as such.”

“I see. That Ooki-san seems to have caught the flu.”

“Flu? Seems like it’s starting to go around.”

Chiho showed a slightly strict expression and raised her head to look at Ashiya who was tall and lanky in build.

“Ashiya-san should be careful. After all, such a serious incident occurred not long ago. If Ashiya-san were to collapse, then Maou-san and Urushihara-san will surely have a lot of trouble.”

“Hahaha, that might not be true. I’m still a Demon General after all. If my body weakens because of an incident of such a level, I would be a poor model. But thank you for your concern.”

Ashiya nodded while showing a peaceful smile.

Chiho knew the truth about Ashiya and Maou, who were vastly different from humans.

She was also aware of what Maou and the rest did in the past.

Under the situation of knowing of these things, she still cared about the health of this Demon General who used military forces to conquer a large continent.

To be able to naturally accept such concern without thinking too much about it, and considering his current situation, Ashiya occasionally found it to be amusing.

During that time, who would have imagined this kind of future?

Unexpectedly, Ashiya started to think about the incidents of the distant past.

Those were past incidents which occurred even earlier than the time when Maou who was the Demon King Satan, invaded Ente Isla and battled the Hero who rose from the humans, Emila.

“Ashiya-san?”

“....Ah, my apologies. What is it?”

Ashiya seemed a bit distracted. No wonder Chiho was worried about him.

Over these past few weeks, not only to Maou, there have been major changes around Ashiya as well.

Ashiya started thinking that he probably had not recovered from the past fatigue while looking at the item Chiho handed over.

“This is omelette containing Shiso. If you don't mind, please take it. I tried really hard to make it starting from the soup stock!”

(T/N: Check Japanese Dashi omelettes.)

What she passed over was a large sealed tupperware.

Chiho was full of respect to Ashiya's skills in house work. And because she had feelings for Maou, she regularly brought all kinds of dishes over.

But it seems like her handbag did not contain only one tupperware.

“I also want to give some to Suzuno-san and Nord-san.”

Kamazuki Suzuno—Crestia Bell lived next door to Maou and Ashiya, in room 202, as for Nord Justina, he was temporarily staying in room 101.

Even though in the past, during the Ente Isla invasion, these two were humans that were Maou and Ashiya's enemies, due to some reasons, they are currently neighbours residing in the same apartment.

“I see.....however.....”

Ashiya looked back to the apartment, looking troubled.

“Unfortunately, they are both out. To Eifuku.....”

Nord was Emi’s father. Every time Nord went out, Suzuno would accompany him as a guard.

From Sasazuka, where Maou and the rest lived, to Eifuku city, it would only take fifteen minutes by train. The apartment where Emi lived was there. And there was probably some kind of intense storm happening at that apartment at the moment.

“Uu. I see. Eifuku, that’s where Yusa-san lives?”

Even Chiho was at a loss of what to do in this awkward scenario.

The size of the tupperware were not small and it would take quite a bit of effort to bring them home.

“Since you took the trouble to come all the way here, why not wait for a while at the Demon Fortress? Bell and Nord Justina went out in the morning, perhaps they will be back soon.”

“Sorry, thank you for the thought.”

Chiho, with a troubled smile, went along with Ashiya's suggestion and walked into room 201.

“But, won't I disturb you?”

“How can that be. When Urushihara's not around, all the housework and chores can be carried out smoothly. I already finished cleaning the house and doing the laundry in the morning.”

“Is, is that so?”

The Demon General Lucifer—Urushihara Hanzo, like Maou and Ashiya, was a demon who lived in this room. But he was hospitalized for certain reasons.

As long as Urushihara, who recklessly uses his master's, Maou's, credit card to buy things, who only plays games and spends time on his computer despite not working, was not around, Ashiya, who has taken the role of room 201's househusband, did not need to lecture Urushihara and could spend his energy on other activities.

“I'll wash the Tupperware now so you can bring it back. Oh, it looks quite tasty.”

After Ashiya transferred the food that Chiho brought onto a plate and wrapped it up with cling film, he immediately brought the empty Tupperware to the sink for washing.

Looking at Ashiya's back, Chiho suddenly found an unfamiliar object in this familiar room. In front of the cabinet was a large piece of folded fabric.

“Ashiya-san, that is....”

“Hm? Ah, that's Demon King-sama's mantle.”

After turning back to see where Chiho was pointing, Ashiya answered her question nonchalantly. Chiho excitedly asked,

“Maou-san's? Was that what he wore when he was a demon?”

“That's right. Even though I kept it properly with pesticides before summer, but it's better to take it once a month for airing. After all, it's mostly made up of expensive materials.”

“Woah!”

Chiho went closer to the mantle and looked at it carefully.

Because it had been folded so beautifully, Chiho did not dare to touch it. But from its appearance, it was apparent that it was made with some high quality materials.

It does not seem as though the material was silk or leather or any other material that Chiho was familiar with, but regardless, if Maou returned back to his imposing Demon King form and wore this mantle, he would definitely have the dignified look of the King of Demons.

But when she thought of the Ente Isla humans who were once invaded by said Demon King—especially Emi and Suzuno who have become her irreplaceable friends, she was unable to honestly say “This is so cool.”

However, to Chiho, Maou, Ashiya and Urushihara’s current selves was the norm, so no matter what, she was interested in things from their past.

“If you don’t mind, do you want to have a look at it?”

Ashiya who noticed Chiho’s interest, picked up the mantle after drying his hands.

“Can, can I?”

Chiho’s eyes sparkled as she looked at Ashiya spreading out the mantle.

“It’s really huge.....”

After all, it was a mantle designed to fit Demon King Satan’s size, so it was enormous when it was spread out.

The mantle took up almost half of six tatami mat room. The shoulder portion had shoulder guards that were made up of some unknown metal and the decorations that looked like medals and fasteners were all exquisitely forged.

“The Demon Army.....ah.”

Chiho’s thoughts temporarily went towards the life that Maou had with this mantle. She looked at Ashiya who was next to her and asked,

“May I know...what kind of place the Demon World is?”

“You’re referring to?”

“Maou-san is the ‘Demon King’ right? But he doesn’t seem to be of nobility.”

“That’s correct.”

“Even so.....um, how am I supposed to ask this.”

Chiho folded her hands over her chest and started pondering.

“That is, even though I know Yusa-san and the rest are humans, and they battled the Demon Army in Ente Isla, but going to the root of the issue, how did Maou-san become the ‘Demon King’.....”

“Oh, I see. You were referring to that.”

“Erhm, even though I feel like I should not be asking about the incidents of the past.”

“No, it’s alright. It’s not as though there is anything to hide. Even I’m not very clear about incidents revolving around the Demon King when he was very young, or the incidents when he met with that angel. But if it’s about how the Demon Army was created, I am able to explain.”

“Ca, can you tell me?”

In contrast to the very excited Chiho, Ashiya answered very calmly,

“Sure. If ‘the other party is Sasaki-san’, I’m sure even Demon King-sama will not refuse.”

“.....Ah.”

Chiho acutely felt Ashiya’s warning.

“Alright...about that, I promise you. I will not use what I heard from Ashiya-san for ‘bad things’.”

Because the other party was Chiho, Ashiya was willing to talk.

In relation to this, Chiho will not leak this information to Emi and Suzuno, or use these incidents to win them over.

Also, for the other side, whatever Chiho hears from Emi and the rest, she will not use this information to win Maou and the rest over.

These were the limitations that Chiho, who was determined to be the bridge between human and demon, had set for herself.

Ashiya was also very clear that as long as it had been mentioned and reminded beforehand, Chiho would definitely not go back on her word.

“Sorry for that, saying things as though I was testing you. Recently Demon King-sama has become unusually anxious. Even for today’s shift replacement, he only agreed because Emila was not around.”

“Really.....so it’s like that.”

Chiho had a complicated expression on her face.

Chiho treasured Maou and Emi dearly. She hoped that these two, as well as all the people around them, can get along.

Even though Ashiya himself did not approve, he still felt that how Chiho will fulfill her dream was something for herself to decide.

“About this, where should I start? Ah, it would probably take quite a while, I’ll make some tea first.”

“Ah, thanks.”

Ashiya poured water into the hot water kettle and moved it to the stove for boiling. It was already the season when hot tea would be more delicious than cold wheat tea.

During the time when the water was being heated, Ashiya stood at the kitchen and started talking,

“Among the Four Kings of the Demon Army that Sasaki-san is familiar with, that is the Demon Generals, I was the third one to become Demon King-sama’s subordinate.”

“Ah, was it like that? I thought you would be the first one....”

Chiho said, her eyes wide in surprise.

As long as anyone saw how loyal and devoted Ashiya usually was to Maou, they would assume that they probably worked towards their goal together from the start.

“Even though I am one of the founding members, but the one who followed Demon King-sama the earliest was neither me, Urushihara, Aldramelech or Malacoda.”

“Eh?”

“Sasaki-san also recognizes that person. Other than us, there was another man with the title of archdemon who came to Japan.”

When Ashiya said this, he moved both his arms to imitate the flapping of wings.

Chiho saw the charade and breathed in sharply when she thought of a certain existence.

“Now that you mention it.....I did hear it from the man himself.....the man? Eh wrong, it should be from the bird?”

Just as Chiho was troubled over the correct term, the kettle had started emitting steam.

“Correct. Though he’s currently called the Demon Minister.”

Ashiya moved the kettle from the source of fire and put it aside. Then he went on to prepare the teapot and tea leaves.

“The Demon Bird General Camio. In actual fact, he was the earliest member of the Four Kings of the Demon Army, the earliest Demon General.”

※

At the northern boundary of the Demon World which was surrounded by a crimson sky, black clouds and a crimson earth, two angry yells rang out.

As though all the mountains of this region were completely weathered and eroded, this large wasteland was scattered with numerous large boulders. In the corner of this wasteland which was commonly known as the “Boulder wastelands”, there was a place which can just barely be called a settlement, a small village where huts were built from these boulders.

In a small house where one could not tell if it was a building or a pile of rubble, the continuous sound of an elderly person and a small child arguing could be heard.

“So I’m saying that you’re being too reckless!”

“Annoying! How would you know if we don’t try!”

“This kind of thing doesn’t need to be tried for us to know the result! If a brat like you goes over, you’ll probably be shot dead from a distance before you even have the chance to see his feathers!”

“Who knows? He might unexpectedly be someone that’s easy to talk to!”

“If I had to say how brutal he is, I couldn’t even handle him during my prime! And you think that you can talk to him!”

“Who cares what you were like during your prime! Then what the hell do you suggest!”

“Which is why I said we have to think about what to do next! Don’t you understand what I’m saying, you stinky brat!”

Among the noisy gale that was filled with the stench of blood and hatred, the arguing voices of an old man and youth could be heard.

“Don’t call people a stinky brat, you stinky old man!”

“You brat, you dare to call me a stinky old man!”

(T/N: Camio addresses himself as > 俺 , a rather archaic pompous way of addressing one self.)

“Ah gagagagagaga, it hurts, it hurts!”

The stinky old man who was agitated by the stupid brat’s rough words squeezed the stupid brat’s slender throat.

“I’m wrong! It’s my fault, let go me already!”

“Hmph! I am completely unable to see that you have any intention of reflecting or respecting your elders! Why not I just crush you to death here?”

“Sorry! I said I’m sorry already! It’s my fault! I’ll listen to what you have to say! Uwah!”

Perhaps he realized that the stinky old man was serious, the stinky brat started to apologise sincerely. The stinky old man threw the stupid brat on the ground like he was a piece of garbage.

“Cough.....cough.....don’t seriously choke other people’s throat..... Camio.”

In the dimly lit small house was a young demon, whose back was dirtied by the dirt, staring at the demon who grabbed his own throat with tearful eyes.

That old demon was called Camio and he had limbs that were humanlike, the head of a bird, wings growing from his back and his entire body was covered with black feathers. Though he was old, his eyes were still sharp and he chided with his equally sharp beak,

“You can't even see the difference between your own abilities and your enemies and you still dare to say such insane things things to me, you are five hundred years too early! Listen well, Satan!”

Camio cleared his throat and sternly stared down at the young demon who was getting up from the ground.

However, the young demon called Satan who had two horns, small wings, a small frame and a lower half that resembled that of a goat, despite being teary from Cameo's magic and boldness, glared back at Cameo fearlessly.

“Against that rogue demon that even I cannot defeat, you are one thousand years too early! Before you even think of doing such a foolish thing, why not think on how to expand your influence in a practical manner!”

“Ugh!”

Satan cough a few time to readjust his breathing and then turned towards Camio and with the same agitated tone that he had before he got strangled, he retorted.

“Camio is the one who should be listening to me carefully! Who said I wanted to defeat that guy! I said I want to bring him to our side!”

“You fool! So you still not understand? Sigh, to think I actually thought this idiotic brat had some capability, am I getting senile?”

“Who cares if you are getting senile, just listen to me! And don't call me an idiotic brat, you bird brain!

Once more, Satan threw a blunt sentence at Camio who starting to sigh.

“Unforgivable, you stinky brat!”

“You’re noisy! What Demon Bird General, you bird brain, stone head, stinky old man!”

Hence, Satan with the once more agitated Camio started an intense fight.

“Damn it! Let go of me, stinky old man! Don’t grab my tail!”

“No, just this once, I cannot listen to you! Listen well, Satan!”

Camio let out another sigh and looked straight at the face of the young demon he lifted off the ground.

“Don’t lump that Lucifer together with other vagrant demons! He’s so powerful that he was able to annihilate the entire group of One-Eyed Tattooed Demons that exterminated your entire clan, and he was left completely unscathed.”

“I heard that many times already!”

“Then why do you not understand! That Lucifer could destroy demons who were ten times more powerful than the Black Goat clan that you belonged to! Do you think you can take on such an opponent by yourself?”

“Which is why I was saying!”

Satan, who was being lifted from the ground by his tail, started to flail his limbs around.

“I am not looking for him for a duel!”

“You still don’t understand? What I mean that just coming into contact with him is a dangerous thing!”

The two people’s arguments and fight, as such, went back to square one.

That demon was once called the Demon Bird General.

The clan leader of the Pahalo Denino clan, Camio, has black wings and a sharp beak as well as a body that was covered with feathers the same color as his wings. He was skilled in various kinds of magic and was able to use Idea Link magic to understand all Demon languages. And he seemed to also be a famous swordsman.

On why the phrase “seems to be” was used, it was because the one who told Satan these things was Camio himself, so he was unable to verify which facts were true.

Essentially, regarding the power of the Pahalo Denino clan, once you remove the ability to fly, there was actually nothing outstanding about them. Furthermore, once they lose a large amount of demonic magic, they have this special characteristic in which their body would shrink.

Of course, there is a special ability for this shrinking power. Once their body shrinks, whether it is for escaping the enemy or for stalking something, it was beneficial.

Even though it was an ability that they naturally possessed, without doubt, in terms of battle strategy to survive the various terrors in the Demon World, this ability can be considered a poor one.

When Camio first met Satan, he was already quite old.

The Pahalo Denino clan can be considered to be having weak bodies, this also directly reflected by the weak standing of this clan where there was only a head count of about two thousand.

And those with enough capability to be classified as warriors only consisted of a quarter of the group, about five hundred of them.

As the strongest of the group was the old Camio, it was quite predictable what the fate of the Pahalo Denino clan would be.

Even so, Camio was the first “demon who could communicate” that Satan met when he was wandering the Demon World alone.

Satan heard many things from Camio, most of which were the same as what ‘that woman’ said to him. Also, ‘that woman’ occasionally mentioned Camio’s name.

Camio also had high regards for the kind of knowledge and wisdom that did not match up with that of a young demon from a weak clan, therefore, the two were acquainted with each other for a decade.

“Hu.....hu.....listen, stinky brat....”

“Hu.....hu.....wh, what is it, stinky old man.....”

The two who were completely exhausted collapsed on the ground and glared at each other while gasping for air.

“I can understand your ideas of wanting to change the Demon World. But you do not have the capability at the moment. Every long journey starts with a first step. Can you just listen to my advice obediently and focus on expanding your influence and gathering experience?”

“Even if you say such a thing!”

Satan spat out some blood and said,

“Most of the vagrant demons around here were defeated by us right? And all those fella’s abilities are almost the same as the young warriors from Pahalo. So where else do you want me to go. Are there any other opponents we can beat?”

“.....”

Camio was unable to immediately answer Satan’s question.

Without Satan reminding him, Camio also knew that one of the reasons behind the decline of the Pahalo Dainino clan was due to the rise of neighbouring rich clans.

When Camio was born, he was strong to the point that he was termed to be a demon that would revolutionise the Pahalo Dainino clan.

Camio in the past had the power to force back entire attacking clans by himself. But in the recent years, neighbouring clans also produced demons as strong as Camio.

At the same time when Camio's power started to decline, the formidable clans around them also started to invade, causing a sharp decrease in the numbers of the Pahalo Dainino clan.

From what Satan heard, in the recent years, the Pahalo Dainino clan has been intentionally challenging those that were considered 'vagrant demons', demons who do not belong to any clan and function by themselves, repeatedly gaining victory without taking their lives, to let the other party join the group in order to function as guards.

Thanks to that, the entire settlement's attack power had an increasing trend. But even so, there was yet to be a demon whose power exceeded Camio's.

Of course once such a demon appears, it would spell the end of Camio's reign and in the worst case scenario, it might even threaten his life. But for those who are now gathered under Camio, most of them would be unable to

defend against the threats of the neighbouring demons once they did not have his support.

And Satan was one of these demons who could survive due to Camio's protection.

“If we went too far to hunt for vagrant demons, then we'll definitely be discovered and annihilated by those wealthier clans. However, we can't find anymore opponents in our safe area right?”

After Satan said that, he turned his head in a certain direction.

“The “Boulder Wastelands” which we are at is just located on the borders influenced by the West side's Ashen Horn clan and the East side's Iron Scorpian clan, which is considered an empty space. And the reason why this place became an empty space was because everyone is terrified of that Lucifer whom you are unable to beat, which is why no one dares to come near right?”

Satan used his finger to draw a simplified version of the area of influences around them on the dirt ground.

Kamio used his eyes to follow the movements of Satan's fingertip, at the same time he let out a groan which could not be heard by Satan.

Even though Camio tends to condemn Satan for not taking things fully into consideration but this young demon was able to naturally use the culture that was preserved by a minority of clans – “Words”, and this was a very unusual thing.

“We know better than anyone why this place became an empty space and it’s not because the Ashen Horns or Iron Scorpions are scared of us. If Lucifer leaves the north of the Boulder wasteland.....leaves the Sand Dunes to another place, then we’ll be in danger right?”

“Ugh.”

Camio nodded with a bitter expression.

Starting from the land claimed by the Pahalo Denino clan and extending all the way to the Western side was the base of the Ashen Horn clan. Their special traits were their enormous and highly muscular bodies, a deep gray beard and the head of a bull. They are a large powerful clan where strength was their pride.

The population of the Ashen Horn clan was at least double that of the Pahalo Denino clan. Furthermore, contrary to their tough appearance, they were also a tribe of warriors skilled in precision magic.

On the other hand, the Iron Scorpion clan may not have the same kind of strength as the Ashen Horn clan. But as implied by their name, they have a strong defense due to the armor that covered their entire body. Their split

ended tail also boosted their attack ability in ways that cannot be underestimated.

Furthermore, their number of warriors was so large that it far surpassed the Pahalo Denino clan's beyond comprehension. They were unmistakably the largest formidable clan in the north side of the Demon World.

And caught in the centre of these two influences and sneakily staying alive are demons whose numbers were not enough to form a decent force like those from weak clans like the Pahalo Denino clan or the Black Goat clan where Satan was born or those 'vagrant demons' mentioned earlier.

Under normal circumstances, weak clans and vagrant demons will avoid agitating formidable clans like the Ashen Horns or Iron Scorpions and barely live their days.

However, the main topic of Satan and Camio's argument earlier – the vagrant demon Lucifer, had strength that was on a different level from the usual vagrant demons.

Whether it was the territory of the Ashen Horn clan or the Iron Scorpion clan, or the land where the vagrant demons or weak clans resided, Lucifer would wander around without any care, and as he would brutally kill other demons on a whim, he was already classified as some kind of natural disaster.

And from the fact that the two formidable clans in the the northern region have deep animosity with each other but have not made any efficient counter

attacks, it can be seen that Lucifer's abilities were far beyond that of common sense.

However, Satan still wanted to approach this vagrant demon whom by logic, was even less approachable than the Ashen Horn or Iron Scorpion clan.

“Since it's like this, then we might as well take this gamble. Invite Lucifer to join us before he leaves, that's our only way to survive right? The way we are gathering vagrant demons inconspicuously, no matter how long it takes, we will be unable to go against the Ashen Horns or Iron Scorpions. And also.....”

Satan explained while using his finger to point at the locations of Lucifer, Ashen Horns and Iron Scorpions that he wrote.

“Once the Ashen Horns or Iron Scorpions or Lucifer feels that we are in the way, then we will be immediately killed. Or maybe, Camio is waiting for some guy as strong as how you used to be to appear within the Pahalo clan? If that guy is just a moron who wants to replace you then we're finished.”

“... ..”

Camio made an obvious groan this time.

Satan's words were completely reasonable and there were no grounds for argument.

Camio was very sure that the ability to convince the others using reasonable logic was very rare in this Demon World.

And most of the residents of the Demon World do not understand this rarity.

Camio met with Satan during a period of chaos.

The current clan leader of the Iron Scorpions did not bother to hide his ambition of gaining territory and greedily invaded neighbouring clans. This kind of method to get rid of everything was something that was part and parcel of the life of demons in the Demon World.

That time, the Iron Scorpions targeted the Pahalo clan and they were about to face total annihilation.

And the one who rescued Camio's warrior group from utter defeat by the Iron Scorpions was Satan.

Camio, who discovered the Iron Scorpions' plan to invade, lead a group of warriors to counter attack but the number of warriors from the warrior division of the Iron Scorpions far exceeded Camio's expectations.

He never expected that the other party would send an army of four thousand soldiers to defeat just mere hundreds of Pahalo Denino warriors. Camio entered a harsh battle and when many of his kind were sacrificed, they could only choose to retreat.

However, the Iron Scorpions did not stop their attack. If Camio's group continued to run, they might cause their entire clan to fall into the Iron Scorpions' bloodthirsty hands.

Camio and his troops who have decided to leave everything up to fate realized that there was a large dust storm heading towards them from the direction they were planning to escape to. There seems to be a group made up of a large number of beings approaching the escaping Camio and troops.

The Iron Scorpions who were on the offense noticed too, but what shocked Camio and the warriors of the Iron Scorpion clan was that the sand storm was created by the reinforcements of the Pahalo Dainino clan.

Faced with a dust storm that enveloped the entire sky, the Iron Scorpion Warriors mistaken it for an enormous troop that was approaching them. Though they did not run but they momentarily stopped their attack.

Camio took that chance to increase the distance between him and the invaders and escaped. That was when he found out that within the dust storm were only a hundred or so young Pahalo Denino members. They were flying close to the ground and strongly flapping their wings more than necessarily to lift the sand from the ground.

And the one leading them was an unknown young demon from the Black Goat clan.

“Are you Camio? To think you would actually neglect your own clan’s land for so long. I had a hard time searching for you.”

Camio will never forget the look on the young Satan’s face when he said the following words with a pleased look.

“What do you think? It looks like a huge army huh?”

Definitely, even Camio had that illusion for a moment and was wondering where that numerous number of clan mates had mysteriously popped out from.

It was apparent that even Camio himself was caught up in Satan’s battle strategy.

Or not. It would be more accurate to say that he had always thought for a long time that a demon that could come up with battle strategies did not exist.

“We better take this chance to escape now. If the Iron Scorpions send more troops over, then we’re really doomed.”

“But after causing such a big ruckus, is there really a way to run.....”

“What are you saying, old sir?”

The young demon spoke to the strongest warrior of the Pahalo Dainino clan arrogantly,

“The Iron Scorpion clan are finding a ‘large Demon Army that can kick up enough dust to cover the sky’. Why would they look for a group made up of a few hundred weak demons that’s ‘not even worth looking at’.”

And this was how Camio and the warriors from Pahalo Dainino safely escaped the clutches of the elite troops of the Iron Scorpions.

After that, even if the Iron Scorpion clan occasionally attacked them again, they would always manage to escape with the help of Satan’s wits.

As far as Camio knew, in this Demon World where only offensive power was used to take down the opponent, only one man thought of using using wisdom to make up for his lack of strength to defeat the enemy.

And on this young demon whose age was only a small fraction of Camio’s age, who would easily die if Camio just swung his sword, he saw that man’s shadow.

Just as Camio questioned Satan on why he came to the land belonging to the Pahalo Denino, Satan nonchalantly answered,

“Because I heard you were someone I could communicate with.”

And what Satan said next was the main factor which moved Camio.

“Follow me, I will let you see the new state of the Demon World.

Camio was unable to answer for a moment.

And the answer he managed to squeeze out was----

“.....It’s too early for you to say such a thing. Let me train you. If you do not fulfill my expectations, I will immediately behead you.”

A phrase from someone who did not accept defeat.

In actual fact, even though Satan displayed knowledge and wisdom that shocked Camio, he still had room for improvement when it came to utilizing that strength properly.

After accepting Camio’s training, Satan’s battle ability and magic ability grew more than what Camio initially expected.

Even so, his power did not even match up to Camio, much less Lucifer’s.

Camio who had the deepest impression on his own ailing self never thought of large goals such as changing the Demon World. He only hoped that Satan would be able to replace himself and protect the Pahalo Dainino clan.

However, Satan now plans to drastically alter the influences around him.

To destroy the balance of animosity between Lucifer, the Ashen Horns and Iron Scorpions.

There was no way that he did not know how reckless his actions were.

Camio thoughts temporarily flew back to the moment when he met Satan. He realised that he still overlapped the impression he had from the olden days on this youth.

Satan lowered his head staring at the simplified diagram he drew, analyzing the different powers in the area.

This analysis that held no doubt made its way into Camio's heart.

The current Satan and Camio as well as the Pahalo Denino clan which had absorbed many neighbouring vagrant demons have already been forced by the three opposing powers to the point that they have nowhere to run.

And in this situation, the course of action most likely to break this balance was Satan's plans to come into contact with the strongest vagrant demon, Lucifer.

Whether it was the Iron Scorpions or the Ashen Horns, they both possessed large armies which made it difficult for them to take action. However, Lucifer was a vagrant demon who moved on his own whim. Perhaps he would leave this place tomorrow or he might even decide to cause unnecessary chaos.

As such, the power struggle in the neighbouring area would change in a flash and this land where Satan and Camio treat as a base would become the battleground for the clash between the Ashen Horns and the Iron Scorpions in the blink of an eye.

There were only two options when strong demon clans battle. It was a simple case of kill or be killed.

Until one party completely annihilates the other, the battle will not end.

Near the end of the battle, the situation will become more and more intense and it would only be a matter of time when one party gets completely crushed.

The clans that get killed by these warriors will become extinct in a flash just like those of the Black Goat clan.

The most exceptional of these clans were the Ashen Horns and the Iron Scorpions who were well-known for their aggressive attacks on other clans.

Once they started battle, perhaps the battle will continue until all the other clans in the northern area were eliminated before it ends.

In the battle between demons, only the defeat of the enemy before them will be acknowledged, there was no such mentality such as “strategic retreat” or “minimal sacrifices”.

There was only carrying out all the brutality one can muster and wiping out the opponent.

There was only taking the life of the other and getting rid of all that looked different from themselves.

The victor was the last one left standing on the land.

Even for Camio who claimed that he himself had strategic thinking, did not see Satan’s previous actions as “retreating”, he only believed it to be “escaping” to preserve one’s own life.

There was no thought of effective tactics within that action, there was only one train of thought of escaping the enemy’s clutches.

“I can understand what you want to say, but Satan.”

Camio said while lowering his voice.

“Whether it’s your relationship with me or the fact that those lower ranked vagrant demons and the Pahalo Denino clan are co-existing, these are all exceptional situations. Not to mention, all that is because I still have power. If someone who is on par with me appears, then it would just be as you said, it would not be strange that someone would want to pull us out of position. Even if one miracle appears after another and Lucifer is persuaded by you, we cannot say for sure that he will not betray us in future.”

“.....”

“I will not harm you. Now is the time for one to rest and recuperate. Your strength has much room for improvement. Even if you are not at Lucifer’s level, perhaps you will be able to train to a stage where you are able to fight me. Before that, any unnecessary curiosity will only attract disastrous results.”

It was unknown if Satan was listening to Camio’s words. He scrunched up his forehead and stared intently at the map.

From the serious look on his face, he should have understood Camio’s calm and logical analysis.

Wrong, that cannot be it.

Camio had already pushed his demon rationality to the limits but Satan, as though he completely did not hear Camio’s analysis at all, said,

“Hey, even though you keep saying really strong, really strong, how strong is Lucifer actually?”

“.....You stinky little brat, you were not listening to me at all.....!”

“Wait a minute! I just wanted to ask! I understand, I don’t think that guy is someone who can be dealt with directly! It’s just that I’m still clueless when you say that he’s stronger than yourself in your prime. So actually, what can he do and to what extent?”

“Do you really understand?”

Camio glared at Satan with a suspicious gaze. At the same time, he thought back to all the information he knew about the vagrant demon Lucifer.

“.....from my impression, he’s specialises in using highly concentrated magic heat rays.”

“Heat rays?”

“That’s right. Heat rays that move at unfathomable speeds which are able to penetrate boulders and magic barriers. Also, they are able to easily pierce through the bodies of the Iron Scorpion warriors which were supposed to be indestructible to whatever methods.”

“Oh, you mean those bastards who are hard as hell.”

“I have seen him once and I was surprised that he was able to fly so quickly with that kind of wings.”

“So he’s someone who can fly in the air with wings.....is he that fast?”

“Yes. His appearance does not look suitable for flight but his aerial combat skills are even more spectacular than someone who is built for flying such as myself. When he fights in the air, the power of his heat rays will decrease, so it seems as though he used some method that involves using magic to increase his propulsion.”

“Turning magic into propulsion force? What’s that supposed to mean?”

“Even though I do not know the details, but that speed definitely does not come from his wings alone. That kind of body which is easily affected by air resistance cannot possible generate those kinds of speed.”

“Oh. Using magic to fly.....I never thought about that before.”

While saying that, Satan tried to flap the small wings that seemed to be attached to his back.

Even though the Black Goat clan had wings, only a few clan members had the ability to fly.

“His hand-to-hand combat skills are also very strong. I had to use my sword in order to put up a decent fight. If both of us were not using weapons, I will probably lose. What’s amazing is, his build is nothing like a large demon’s.”

“Oh. He’s really small huh. Because even the Ashen Horn and Iron Scorpion clans are afraid of him, I thought he was really huge.”

“He’s about your size.”

“I see. Then what does he look like?”

Camio who was rattling off his answers to Satan’s questions suddenly hesitated for a moment.

“.....Hm, about that.”

“Hm?”

“.....I only know of one demon who had a similar appearance as Lucifer.”

“Hm? What’s that supposed to mean?”

“It means that his appearance is different from all the demons in the demon world. To be more specific, from what I know, there is only one person who

has a similar appearance to him and that person had already died a long time ago.”

“It doesn’t matter what happen to that guy who died. I’m asking you what Lucifer looks like.”

“.....Satan.”

“Hah?”

“Do you know of a race called humans?”

Camio did not miss the moment when Satan inhaled sharply as though he had been attacked.

“Do you know?”

“.....not at all, so what?”

Satan denied weakly. Camio was able to see through that kind of lie.

Satan knows about “Humans”.

Even though Camio always wondered where and how such a young demon from a weak clan gathered so much knowledge, even he felt surprised this time.

“.....About Lucifer.”

“Uh huh.”

“Has the appearance of the race known as “Humans” and wings just like myself.”

“.....Oh.”

At that moment, a knowing glint flashed across Satan’s eyes.

“Hey, Camio. That guy called Lucifer is so strong that even if you face him at your prime, you were unable to win right.”

“Eh. Didn’t I say that several times earlier?”

“Then, why are you still alive?”

“What.....is that supposed to mean? “

Camio who intended to answer suddenly stopped to think.

“Based on what you said, that guy is even harder to handle than the usual Iron Scorpions and Ashen Horns. Then why are you still alive even though you lost?”

“Erhm....it must be because my power far exceeded his expectations.”

“But you lost.”

“Gnghhh.....”

Even though Camio tried to casually gloss over the situation, Satan still mercilessly shattered his pride.

“And why is it that with such power, Lucifer is still dilly-dallying around till now?”

“Dilly-dallying.....”

“He has the skill to annihilate the One eyed Tattooed Demons by himself, so why not challenge the Ashen Horns or the Iron Scorpions seriously? Even though the nearby vagrant demons seemed to be all killed by him, he can fly, which means that his area of activity should be relatively wide right? If he’s

your usual monstrous demon, then there is no way this area would be so calm, there should be even more chaos.”

“Hrm, er.....yes, you are right about that.....but only Lucifer himself will know the actual reason.....”

“So we can only ask him.”

“.....yeah.....eh? Wait, brat! Why are you saying such things again.....”

“Asking me to wait again! Were you listening to what I was saying? From what I can see, Lucifer is not a normal demon. I have an “idea”.”

“What did you say?”

“Lucifer is different from the Ashen Horns, the Iron Scorpions and ourselves, he does not move based on his ambition for more territory. Lucifer is moving based on other reasons. As long as we can make use of this.....”

Satan smiled fearlessly and said,

“Perhaps he might be even easier to control than the nearby vagrant demons?”

What in the world was he thinking to think that Lucifer was easy to control. Satan's words were beyond Camio's comprehension.

After that, Camio spent a whole day trying to dismiss the Satan's thoughts of wanting to come into contact with Lucifer, however----

“.....That stinky little twerp! And to think I tried to persuade him to such an extent!”

The following day, no matter how much Camio tried to search, he was unable to find neither hair nor tail of Satan around the Pahalo Denino clan's settlement.

“Hey! Where did that brat go.....”

Camio grabbed a youth from the Pahalo Denino clan who happened to be nearby and asked.

“.....what?”

The words that came out from that youth's mouth was completely out of Camio's expectations.

※

“I think I’m almost there.”

Satan surveyed his surroundings from the top of a small hill.

After running for a night from the settlement belonging to the Pahalo Denino clan, Satan was sure that he had entered Lucifer’s area of influence.

Even though there was no boundary between the lands, the surrounding atmosphere was definitely different.

The smell of the air, the temperature and surrounding feeling, even though all these are abstract factors, but when they came together they slowly became definite pieces of information.

At the north of the boulder wastelands was a hard dry sandy surface where only a sparse amount of grass grew. There were also short trees that were just barely able to grow. This place was called the Sandy wastelands and it was the place where Lucifer was staying.

“I know. I’m probably being looked down upon.”

If that demon called Lucifer was as strong as what Camio claimed, then Satan presence should have been felt already. But Satan could not feel any air of aggressive attack that would even make Camio frightened.

Even after cautiously observing from a distance, there was no feeling of Lucifer's presence among the sparsely scattered short trees.

Perhaps it was because Lucifer was strong enough to take on many powerful demons at the same time such that he did not care about small demons like Satan.

“Or could it be that he has already left this area. If that's the case, then we're in trouble.”

It was also a problem if Lucifer was not around. At the moment, this area was able to maintain stability because of Lucifer's influence. Once Lucifer's power was out of the picture, this would become a battlefield for the two large influences very quickly.

“No, that would be horrible! If it's like that now, it would be too horrible. No matter what, Lucifer has to stay here!”

Afterwards, Satan continued running around this wasteland anxiously for about half a day but he was unable to find any trace of Lucifer. Therefore, Satan had no choice but to use his last resort.

After running around for half a day, the atmosphere in the air did not change at all. This meant that Lucifer, who created this kind of atmosphere, was still around. It seems that even if he discovered Satan, he was leaving him alone for certain reasons.

Or maybe Lucifer was using invisibility magic and observing the invader, and it was just that Satan cannot see him.

“.....alright! If that’s the case!”

Satan made up his mind. He patted both his cheeks and took a very deep breath.

“Hey! Please come out for a while!”

Then, Satan made use of the extremely primitive method of loudly calling for his opponent.

Other than Lucifer, there was no vagrant demon in the area that will attack Satan as they all have been killed by Lucifer already.

“Lucifer! I have something to say to you!”

With the relaxed tone just like a human child looking for his friend to play, Satan loudly called Lucifer’s name.

“I didn’t come here because I got lost! I’m here to look for you! Do you hear me? Please come out!”

However, no one responded. Could Lucifer be asleep or was he a demon who needed to sleep?

“Lucifer! Lucifer~~~! Come out! You should know that a demon like me is no match for you! I won’t do anything to you! Come out!”

Satan was undaunted and continued shouting loudly.

Lucifer was definitely observing the movements in this area. And because he was observing the area, he definitely had his guard up to some extent, which was why Satan, who brazenly stepped into his territory, was unable to feel any magic aura that was enough to overpower Camio.

In other words, Lucifer was nearby.

“Hey~I~~”

Satan decided to shout that sentence.

“I have an awesome idea that can help you pass your time!”

It was at that moment.

“Uwah!”

Countless purple tinted magic orbs surrounded Satan in a flash.

As it was apparent that each magic orb had the energy to quickly incinerate someone, Satan, who could not budge an inch, could only move his eyes around desperately to observe the surroundings.

“.....Did I make you angry?”

In his field of vision, there was no sign of a demon. But it seems that Satan had successfully hooked onto Lucifer (prey).

Now the only thing to consider was how to reel him in, however.....

“Who the hell are you?”

There was a voice coming from above Satan.

“.....Can I lift my head to look up?”

Before Satan enquired the other party's identity, he first asked if he could move.

After all, Lucifer was a demon who was far stronger than Satan. If he made any reckless move, he might get killed in an instant. The other simpler reason

was that Satan was worried that if he lifted his head, the back of his head might touch one of the magic orbs.

“Alright. But if you dare to make any weird movements, I will pierce your head through your eye.”

“I understand. I won’t do anything. I’ll look up now.”

Satan answered frankly and at the same time bent his neck backward nervously to look right above himself.

“Are you.....Lucifer?”

“You’re the one who called me here?”

“Uh, yeah, something like that.”

Even though Satan was unable to move a finger like just now, he finally confirmed Lucifer’s appearance.

What a petite demon.

Even though Satan was unable to see the other person’s face clearly because his back was against the sun, he seemed to be about Satan’s size.

The only special trait of the other person was the wings extending from his back. There were no long horns or giant claws.

The long black coat that wrapped around him was of a design that Satan had never seen before.

Furthermore, this form was unexpectedly similar to another existence within Satan's memory.

“So, what business do you have with me? I was in the middle of napping. If the contents are boring, I'm going to burn you to crisp and then go back to sleep.”

“Ah, may I speak?”

“You may.”

Why he chose to get permission to make his next move was to ensure his own safety.

Even though he was sweating all over due to the heat radiating from the magic orbs, Satan still slowly chose his words.

“Anyway, let me introduce myself. I'm called Satan. I live somewhere south

of this sandy wasteland, a place filled with boulders. I came here today because I have something to say to you.”

“I know you have something to say. Get straight to the point, I don’t have much patience.”

Once Lucifer finished speaking, the fur on the end of Satan’s tail was getting burnt as the magic orb touched it.

Even so, Satan looked straight at Lucifer, unwavering and said,

“.....Do you want to play together with me?”

“Ah?”

“You must be bored right? Let’s play.”

“.....I don’t understand what you’re saying.”

Lucifer said, feeling perplexed.

“It means exactly as how I’m saying it. Let’s go play.”

“.....what, do you want to fight with me?”

“Of course not. How am I supposed to win against you? I just want to bring you somewhere else to play. Besides, you’re free right now right? Do you want to go do something fun with me?”

As the light was behind Lucifer, his expression could not be seen clearly but this was the first time it garnered a reaction.

“Something fun huh. Right now, just killing off the nearby demons when I feel like it can be considered quite fun. Is there something more fun than this?”

“If you don’t find it fun anymore, you can kill me to ensure that there is something that “can be considered quite fun”.”

“.....You’re really interesting.”

At that moment, all the magic orbs that surrounded Satan disappeared together just like when they appeared.

“Wahaaa!”

Satan exhaled all the air that he was holding and weakly fell onto the ground.

“What, you’re frightened from such a thing?”

Lucifer landed in front of Satan who was breathing raggedly.

That extremely slight voice, made Satan confirm once more that the other person was really a petite demon.

“It, it can’t be helped...my ability is not that strong after all.”

“Hmph. So what kind of entertainment can a small fry like you provide me?”

And for the first time, Satan looked straight at Lucifer who was standing in front of him and saw his face.

Young.

That was his first impression.

Even though the features of the demons of the demon world differ between species and clans, but Lucifer’s face which had similar structure to his own seemed to be extremely young.

No matter how one looked, it did not seem like he had the power to put the Ashen Horns and Iron Scorpions on guard or overpower Camio. Even compared to “that woman”, it was obvious he was younger.

Even so, if he did cross swords with Camio when he was at his prime, then his actual age cannot possibly match his youthful appearance.

About age, “that woman” seemed to have said something similar.

However, Lucifer’s appearance was not the main point. Even though Satan managed to barely stand on the stage to interact with Lucifer, he was still flirting with death.

“.....change.”

With carefully chosen words, Satan answered Lucifer’s question.

“Change?”

“That’s right. I heard that you are very strong, and that seems to be true in reality. What kind of demons do you usually fight?”

“There’s nothing special, they’re just like everyone else. As long as I feel like they’re in the way or they’re targeting me then I’ll kill them off, that’s all.”

“But, to you, fighting can be considered enjoyable?”

“Yeah, I’m really strong. Being able to beat up my opponents is an enjoyable thing.”

“I can satisfy you when you are looking for something enjoyable, I can help you prepare enemies and situations necessary for you.”

“.....Oh?”

There was a reaction. Even if it was just a little, Lucifer was starting to develop some interest to Satan’s words.

“Of course, once you felt that you had enough and you don’t feel like cooperating with me, you’re free to stop anytime.”

“Is this the “entertainment” you were talking about?”

“Nope. It’s just me working hard to prepare appropriate offerings for you.”

“You’re right about that. Then again, you’re only a brat, how do you know such complicated words?”

“I also have my hardships.”

Satan said offhandedly.

Even though it does not matter much to say the truth, creating some secrecy does help to attract the other party to some extent.

“Your power and mine can change the battle in the Demon World. The demons of this world will imitate the battle between you and me. In the end, I will stand at the peak of the world. Of course, I will handle all the troublesome things, you just have to fight in my place whenever you feel like it.”

“The demons of this world will imitate the battle between you and me? How can such a thing happen?”

“Even if I use words to explain, you probably won’t be able to understand. As long as you follow me, you will experience it yourself.”

“.....”

Lucifer momentarily fell into silence as though pondering Satan’s words.

“Hmph~ you definitely helped me pass some time.”

“.....Huh?”

Lucifer, who really only thought about things for a slight moment, nodded his hand and pointed a finger right at Satan.

Once Satan realized that the other party was gathering magic at his fingertip, he quickly put on a defensive stance.

“But nevermind. That kind of thing is too troublesome after all. I will tolerate

“things that can still be considered fun”. I can’t be bothered to care about you.”

“Uh, that....”

“Right, you said that you’ll help me prepare enemies if I wanted to fight. Right now, I want to kill you or fight someone else for some fun. Help me get some enemies. If not, this talk ends. You have ten seconds.”

He definitely looked like he wanted to be part of it and then he simply changed his mind in the next second. This kind of fickleness instead attracted Satan’s admiration.

If he did not even have such a standard, then there was no way he could survive in this Demon World. To be able to engage in such a long “conversation” can already be considered a miracle in some ways.

“You want me to prepare enemies now?”

“Uh huh, that’s right. I request that you help me prepare about ten demons. Eh, that is, if you can do it.”

To prepare ten demons in ten seconds.

In this land which was controlled by Lucifer, in this land where one cannot even feel another demon's presence, this kind of thing was impossible.

“Sigh, I admit that you are an interesting guy. But I detest people who say empty words. In the first place, I'm not someone who's that hardworking and there's no guarantee that you can keep bringing me entertainment.”

The magic orb at the end of Lucifer's finger has clearly manifested to have an overwhelming amount of energy, all ready to pierce through Satan's body.

“Ok, ten seconds are up. Bye bye little demon scrap.”

Lucifer smiled the cruelest smile that he had ever shown so far, however----

“Who said I can't do it?”

“Ah?”

Even in the face of the death ray, Satan revealed a fearless smile. Just as Lucifer frowned as he sensed something was fishy----

“Huh?”

Following an explosion, a force went straight at Lucifer's body causing him to become unsteady and he started groaning.

Before he could comprehend what was going on, there was the sound of multiple objects sailing through the air towards him.

“Wha, what’s going on?”

Lucifer completely ignored Satan, extended the wings on his back and escaped into the air.

Numerous giant boulders as sharp as awls were falling one after another at the spot where Lucifer was just standing.

“Ohwahhhhhhhhhhh!”

Satan frantically dodged the boulders as well.

The impact that Lucifer felt just now was due to a boulder that struck his back directly.

“That’s...the Iron Scorpion clan?”

Lucifer lowered his head in surprise looking at the young demon who was dodging the boulders for his dear life.

The ones who initiated the attack were members of the Iron Scorpion warriors who by right, should not be around the area. Even if one cannot tell the exact numbers, but from the presence felt, there were at least ten of them.

“Don’t, don’t tell me....?”

Even if he did indeed say he wanted around ten demons, but was it really possible to find enough demons to make up such numbers in such a short time.

No matter what it was, it was necessary to get rid of those troublesome people first.

Though it was not known why the Iron Scorpion clan, who have not done anything till now, would suddenly commit such violent actions, the only thing to do right now was to make them pay for ambushing him.

Lucifer concentrated the magic into his wings and released them all explosively, sending an attack towards the Iron Scorpion warriors who were using telekenisis from a distance to launch the rocks.

“What did you do?”

“What! It hurts! Damn it! Some rock pieces fell into my nose! Uwah!”

Lucifer, who only spent mere minutes to eliminate that group of Iron Scorpion warriors grabbed Satan, whose nose was running and his eyes tearing, by the chest and lifted him up into the air.

“Wha, what is it? What are you doing? Let go of me!”

“I’m the one asking the questions here. How did you do that. How did you bring those Iron Scorpions here and let them attack me? Those bastards will never listen to demons who are not their companions.”

“I didn’t bring them here! I planned for them to come here! They were not under anyone’s command, they came here on their own accord!”

“Planned....? On their own accord? What are you saying?”

“I, I won’t speak any further! If you want to know, then go play at where I live! Or I won’t tell you how I did it!”

“.....Are you freaking serious? Actually looking down on me like that.....!”

“Uwah!”

Just as Lucifer let out a growl full of fury and was prepared to choke Satan's neck...

A glaring purple light flashed between the two and the force resulting from that forced Satan and Lucifer apart.

"Just, just now.....what was that.....?"

Lucifer looked at his own hand that was forced away by some energy which "was not demonic magic" in surprise.

"That huuuuuuurrrrrrrttttttt? Wha, what was that just now!"

As for Satan, he fell in a parabolic arc onto the distant ground and was rolling on the ground in pain.

"It seems like.....it's not that guy's doing, but, that energy just now was....."

Even though he was confused by the light and force that came from somewhere near Satan's tattered and torn collar, Lucifer still slowly landed next the the young demon who was writhing in pain on the ground.

"What is your plan for recruiting me?"

“That really hurtsssss.....eh? What?”

Just before Lucifer asked his question, Satan kept repeatedly feeling around his chest and only put his hands down after he seemed to have touched a certain something.

(T/N: In case it wasn't obvious what caused the purple light, it was the fragment of Yesod that Lailah gave him, i.e. Alas=Ramus. It's hanging around Satan's neck.)

Lucifer did not specially take note of Satan's actions and continued asking,

“What benefits will there be if I work with you?”

“.....Hm? What, you're willing to come with me?”

“Answer me. What is your goal? First you pique my interest then you say that you want to play with me. Whatever it is, you need my strength to reach your goal right?”

“Yeah! That, even if I say it directly, I'm not even sure if the other person will understand. At least, all those fellas who I met before were all unable to comprehend what I'm saying.”

“.....If I really had to say it, I never thought there would be a demon who was able to say such words. Are you really a demon? What are you thinking?”

“.....About that.”

Satan patted his body which was covered in dust and pointed towards the sky.

“It’s okay to tell you, I don’t plan to hide it in the first place. But I really hope that you can follow me, please don’t misunderstand that. I.....”

Lucifer could not refrain from looking in the direction where Satan’s finger was pointing.

That place seemed to be only the red sky but Lucifer knew what was in the direction where Satan was pointing.

“Want to go there. Even though I only heard about it from someone else, I am unable to reach that place by myself. Even if I reached there, I will probably die immediately.”

“.....you heard about it from someone else?”

“As I was saying, because there is no way to go there right now, I want to build up my skills and then I want to change the Demon World.”

“.....You’re saying such exaggerated things again.....”

“I’m not joking. At least according to the information I heard.”

Satan pointed towards the sky once more.

“Before that goal stands many people who are stronger than me, Camio or yourself, their numbers are also even more than the numbers belonging to the largest clan. If I meet people like them, it would be troublesome if it evolved into a war. Therefore, I need to gather everyone and become stronger.”

The desire to grow stronger was definitely not a lie. But Satan was clear that most demons were unable to understand the real hidden desire in his heart, which was to progress even further.

The real desire that Satan kept hidden, it seemed to be a natural feeling to the people to lived in the distant ‘place ahead’, however, to the demons of the Demon World, it was only a weakness.

For a second, Satan thought back to the last memory of his clan. He remembered the corpses of his parents sinking in a sea of blood, but he quickly dismissed those memories.

He wanted to make that kind of scenery disappear from the Demon World. He does not want any child like himself to appear again.

But if he revealed everything now and caused Lucifer to change his mind, it would be troublesome.

“So, what do you plan to do? You might lose a bit of time following me but I do not think you will be in a disadvantageous situation. If you find yourself sick of it and you want to leave, it’s even okay to kill me.”

“.....”

Lucifer glanced at Satan’s face and gazed at the sky once more.

“About the people who live far away.....”

Who did you hear about them from?

Lucifer quickly swallowed the words that were about to escape from his mouth.

“Hm? What is it?”

“No.....it’s nothing.”

Lucifer shook his head, took a deep breath and glared at Satan threateningly.

“Once I’m tired of it, I will leave immediately.”

“Woah!”

Even after being glared at with a murderous look, the young demon before him still clapped his hands in glee.

“That’s greattttttttt! Haiya~ I’m really thankful! I’m super happy! Thank you!”

“Ehya?”

Even though one can say that it was a moment of carelessness, Lucifer still became flustered when his hand suddenly got grabbed.

“What are you doing?”

The other party did not waver even when his hand got slapped away.

“Hm? Strange? You can’t do this either? When you’re happy, you’re supposed to “shake hands” with the other person right? That was what I heard.”

“.....What in the world is up with you.....”

Even though it was only for a short while, Lucifer still looked down at the hand that got held and frowned.

The last time he felt any warmth of life besides the blood from his dying enemies was something that happened a few hundred years ago. Even though he was unable to recall the last memory relating to that, it still brought up an amazing feeling of nostalgia in Lucifer. He stared at the excited young demon and asked,

“.....What’s your name?”

“I said it just now didn’t I! Satan! Satan Jacob!”

“Uwah, what a common name.”

To Lucifer’s knowledge, this was a very common name in the Demon World. However, the thing that was hidden in the heart of this youth who possessed that name cannot even be described as common. It emitted a spectacular light that even Lucifer himself had never experienced.

“Good. Since we have reached this stage, let’s not dilly dally any longer! So just follow me first, Lucifer! After this, it’s a race against time.”

“I say, my powers are above yours and I’m much older than you. Why don’t you have a shred of respect for me?”

“.....!”

Satan's eyes widened in surprise and he looked straight at Lucifer's face. Then he replied with a smile,

“You should also know that it's not normal to “respect” demons from other clans.”

“I”

“Sorry, I won't respect you. I won't let anyone see me like that. That's not something a normal demon would do. And no one knows that I'm not normal. That is my current advantage. I believe that you would be able to understand that. So I will not show you any respect.”

“.....I see.”

This statement was something that was very easy to understand in Lucifer's mind.

“I understand. Alright. But conversely, do not let me feel bored.”

“Leave it to me!”

After saying that, Satan started walking, pleased with himself.

Watching his back, Lucifer sighed hard.

“.....How many days do you plan to spend to go back?”

“Wah.”

Lucifer pulled Satan’s collar from the back and flew to the sky in one leap.

“.....to which direction?”

“There! In front of those two mountains that are joined together!”

“.....Oh, it’s the place where that talkative old bird is right?”

“You really do know Camio! Camio said he had an exciting duel with you before.”

“Oh, so that old man treated his battle against me as his own heroic legend huh.....I’ll just go scare him since I haven’t seen him for a long time.”

“Speaking of which, I’ve been wanting to ask, why didn’t you finish Camio off after defeating him?”

“.....What, that old man didn’t tell you?”

“Nope. He doesn’t seem to be too sure of the reason either.”

Satan’s honest answer made Lucifer raise an eyebrow as he smiled bitterly.

“Since that guy doesn’t remember, then just treat it as though I let him off for some trivial reason. There’s no special meaning behind it.....I’m going to fly.”

“Woah-----! It’s so fasttttttttt!”

Lucifer smiled a bit and then started to fly towards the settlement belong to the Pahalo Denino clan. Satan’s voice also started to dissipate in the air because of the intense speed.

“Whhhhhhhhyyyyyyyyyyy?”

“Camio! I’m back!”

The settlement of the Pahalo Denino clan had entered a state of panic because of Lucifer’s sudden visit.

And the one leading the group was of course, Camio.

“Lu, lu, Lucifer?”

“Hi.....long time no see, Camio.”

Lucifer who landed while still carrying Satan flashed a cruel smile and stared at a flustered Camio.

“You, you, what are you doing here!”

Seeing that Camio was really flustered, Lucifer casually threw Satan onto the ground.

“That hurt! Hey, aren’t you being too rough?!”

“Hmph, seeing how surprised you look, this should not be an idea that you helped him come up with.”

Ignoring Satan’s protest, Lucifer used an icy gaze to look towards the nervous old demon.

“Wha, what’s that supposed to mean! What did you say about me?!”

“No, nothing much. An interesting brat invited me to play, so I’m merely accepting his invitation.”

“Accepting his invitation.....h, hey, Satan, you didn’t really.....”

“That really hurtssss.....Didn’t I say it before?! He’s unexpectedly easy to talk to. Try your best not to make him unhappy because Lucifer is now my comrade.”

“It’s playmate.”

“Un, unbelievable.....”

To Camio, to make Lucifer, who had enough strength to strike fear in the Iron Scorpions and Ashen Horns, into one of their comrades, was beyond his wildest imagination.

“Ri, right! Satan, you rascal! What did you ask one of my subordinates on your own accord. One of the scouts told me that the Iron Scorpion’s territory had some strange movement.”

Just when he realised that Satan had gone missing, a warrior came running back from some unknown direction, out of breath.

After Camio questioned that warrior, he then knew that that warrior went somewhere near the Iron Scorpion's territory.

Satan, who got asked about that, nonchalantly replied,

“Oh, you're that guy who got asked by me to go to the boundary of the Iron Scorpion clan's territory to shout “Lucifer has joined sides with the Ashen Horns”, right?”

“Huh?”

“What did you say?”

Both Lucifer and Camio were immensely surprised by this unexpected answer.

“Those Iron Scorpions were probably scouts who got sent out to verify Lucifer's movements. But I never thought they would launch an attack without giving a warning first. I actually wanted them to just approach Lucifer and then get discovered.”

“.....Oh, I see.”

Faced with Satan who was pleased with himself, Lucifer was unsure whether to be in awe or to be astonished.

If not for the Iron Scorpion's violent behavior, Satan would have been burnt to ashes in the northern part of the wastelands.

“If the Iron Scorpions did not come, what did you plan to do?”

“Knowing the Iron Scorpion's clans regular patrol and behavior, I believed they would definitely arrive. I walked there calculating how long they would take. Furthermore, I had another script for what to do if the Iron Scorpions arrived first and attacked Lucifer.”

Satan casually shrugged his shoulders.

“Also, if I got killed by you, it means that my life is only to that kind of level, just like the rest of my clan.”

No one regarded this as a deep resolution. This was the Demon World where life was extinguished by power, it was a natural reasoning.

Even so, Camio still said as though remanding Satan,

“Using your own life as a gamble is the last resort among last resorts. Please treat yourself with more importance.”

“Heh heh heh.....”

Perhaps Satan understood this and he awkwardly laughed while scratching his head.

“This little brat is really.....Hm? Wait a minute, if Lucifer is now here.....”

Camio seemed to have realised something and closed up on Satan once more. The latter nodded his head hard and said,

“That’s right. Lucifer’s “restrictions” have disappeared so the environment for the Ashen Horns and Iron Scorpions to wage a full scale war is complete. Once the Iron Scorpions realise that Lucifer had left the sandy wastelands, a war will start.”

“What are you thinking, you rascallllllllll! Are you trying to put the lives of my clansmen in danger?!”

“Hurttttttttttssssssss!”

Camio started to tightly choke Satan’s neck. Lucifer advised against it, saying,

“.....Wait, old bird. Don’t forget about me. Currently, I am standing on your side. Satan did not do anything stupid.”

“Ye, yeah, Camio! Lucifer is a comrade! Comrade!”

“Who would believe that! Even if that guy is a comrade, so what.....!”

“As long as Lucifer moves with us, then whether it’s the Ashen Horns or the Iron Scorpions or even other stragglers, they would know that Camio is not the only one supporting us here!”

“So what! Even if Lucifer and myself are here, we cannot interfere with the all-out war between the Ashen Horns and the Iron Scorpions! Whether it’s the clan leaders on both sides or the warriors who get dragged in, there are too many unpredictable factors!”

“Calm~down~a~bit~Camio! Who said that we’re going to interfere with them! Let go of me!”

After Satan quickly escaped from Camio’s wings, he rubbed his neck which had been strangled just now and said this with tears in his eyes.

“If you don’t plan to interfere, then what do you plan to do? Don’t tell me you plan to run away? If you want me to be your bodyguard during the escape, I’m going to leave now.”

Satan wagged his finger at Lucifer.

“How is that possible! Sigh, even though I can’t deny that I want you to be a bodyguard.....”

As he spoke, Satan started to draw the diagram of influence of the surrounding areas again just like before.

Lucifer watched Satan fluently write down ‘words’ in surprise.

“Old man, did you teach him this?”

“.....No.”

Camio shook his head in response to Lucifer’s question.

A young demon who was only born a few decades ago was actually able to use the culture lost to almost all the clans in the Demon World----‘words’, Lucifer found it difficult to hide his surprise at this. If this was not the result of Camio’s teachings, it was all the more surprising.

The youth ignored both the adult demons and finished the influence diagram.

“Lucifer, the Iron Scorpions and the Ashen Horns have always been fighting each other at this place, even if Lucifer has left the place for the time being right now, the Iron Scorpions and the Ashen Horns would probably only discover this after a period of time, so we can make use of this time window.”

After saying this, Satan changed the ‘Ashen Horns’ which he had written down to ‘Us’.

“We are going to obtain the Ashen Horns, and conquer the northern area of

the Demon World, and change the situation to a battle between the Iron Scorpions and us.”

“.....I don’t understand what you’re talking about at all.”

Satan answered Lucifer nonchalantly,

“To put it in a more extreme manner, we just have to do the same thing as when I brought you here. Because we have many warriors who can reply, we will challenge the Ashen Horns whom we have more advantage over when we fight. And that place is close to here!”

“Sigh.....”

“What did you say?”

Lucifer and Camio could not help but look at each other.

Satan happily looked at both their surprised expressions, and pointed to the map with ‘Us’ written on it once more.

“We have to make Adramelech and the Ashen Horns who he leads become our ‘playmates’ before the Iron Scorpions discover that Lucifer is not around. Hey, Camio.”

Satan’s calling of his name caused the elderly demon swordman to shudder.

Camio though, perhaps he had picked up a really outrageous guy to take care of.

“Haha, are you afraid?”

The familiar gaze the young demon showed caused Camio to become unable to move, and even if he was seen through by Lucifer, he did not feel angry at all.

“This is a chance for the name of the Demon Bird General Camio of the Pahalo Denino clan to spread far and wide once more. Do you want to join in?”

※

Only the land over there had dangerous steep mountains which looked like they raised up into the sky. Countless caves were opened up in the mountain, showing that this mountain was actually a ‘city’.

The caves, which served as windows as well, were not used to look at the scenery outside, but for alerts to attacks from external enemies.

Countless arrows, spears and demonic magic orbs shot towards the sky through that window.

The spears thrown by the burly demons with bull heads, possessed greater power than normal demonic magic orbs.

As if mocking the arrows and spears, the warriors of the Pahalo Denino clan sporadically fired demonic magic orbs at the stone city.

Even though they lacked strong warriors, they were still a clan of demonic birds born with bodies made for flying. Not only was it difficult for the straight flying spears or javelins to hit them, even if something goes wrong, Camio's defense magic would deflect all attacks.

This battle looked like an idiotic small clan suddenly finding trouble with the large noble Ashen Horn clan, but in the shadows, there were two small figures sneakily making their move.

"If there is a way outside, that means that there is also a way inside."

"H, hey! Are we really taking action in such narrow place uwahh!"

Satan and Lucifer were walking forward in a narrow tunnel which could not be passed unless the two small sized demons bent over.

There was flowing water below the tunnel which was completely unlit, causing the bottoms of their feet to be especially muddy.

"Quiet. Else we'll be discovered."

"So what if we are found out! Uwah, my feet are wet! It feels really gross!"

The both of them have already walked to a place where the light from the entrance could not be seen, therefore Satan was completely unable to see if Lucifer had frowned.

“If we get discovered, things will become very troublesome. Our goal is to meet the leader here without being discovered.”

“Then why can’t we be discovered! The Ashen Horn warriors aren’t my match at all.”

“It would be troublesome if you won, didn’t I explain this before we headed out?”

Satan replied in a rather irritated manner.

Even though a detailed discussion was held before they left from the Pahalo Denino settlement, currently it looked like Lucifer had not been listening at all.

Form an ‘alliance’ with the leader of the Ashen Horns, Adramelech.

This was Satan’s next goal after obtaining a strong trump card known as Lucifer.

Even though Satan spent a lot of time to make Camio and Lucifer understand the concept of ‘alliance’, after mentioning that asking the vagrant demons,

including Lucifer, to join the Pahalo Denino clan was also essentially considered an alliance, Camio roughly understood.

Individuals or groups helping each other and taking the same actions for a common goal, that was an ‘alliance’.

So what was this goal?

Camio and Lucifer thought that as long as they worked together with the Ashen Horns, their goal would be set as annihilating the most powerful force in this area, the Iron Scorpions.

“Sigh, at the current stage, it would be easier to say it in this way.”

Even though Satan did not deny it, Camio and Lucifer were ‘demons who can be communicated with’.

Therefore, they actually noticed that Satan’s thoughts were not just this.

“Then again, does this cave really lead anywhere? If we find out that it’s a dead end at the end, I will blast open my surroundings on the spot, you know?”

“I say.”

Satan turned his head, and spoke to Lucifer in a low volume.

“Why do you think we are walking through this huge hole with water flowing out. This waterway was built in a stone mountain where demons are living in. It’s obvious that there will be something on the other end.”

“Ah, I see.”

The feeling of Lucifer clapping his hands once was felt from behind.

“Anyway, let’s move quickly. Oh, starting from here, the walls become especially steep. Lucifer, climb up with your hands and feet. Don’t use demonic magic okay.”

“Eh?”

Satan responded to Lucifer’s sound of protest in a relaxed manner.

“Different from their appearance, the Ashen Horns are skilled at demonic magic. If our demonic magic is discovered here, we’ll be buried alive. Ah, at that time you can’t use your power to blow it apart okay. If we get discovered and cause a commotion before we meet the clan leader, then we have lost.”

“.....If I can choose, I would rather kill you now.”

“As long as you bear with it a bit, something interesting will become even more interesting. Alright, it’s time to go. Even though I’m also worried about Camio and the others outside, the worst case scenario would be the Iron Scorpions discovering the commotion on the territory of the Ashen Horns.

Because the distance is really far, the possibility should be very low.....oh, this is the end point.”

After climbing for a short while, flickering lights started to appear above the tunnel.

“We finally reached!”

“Be quieter! Good, looks like we can go out. There’s no one around. Okay, we can come up.”

Satan first poked his head out to observe the surroundings, and only allowed his body to leave the cave after confirming that it was safe.

“I see, even though the central mechanism is not known, the water gathered above the city was collected from various water routes.....fortunately, it’s not the sewers.”

“Sewers? What’s that?”

“No, nothing.”

Acting like he did not know, Satan shook his head in response to Lucifer’s question as he caught up from behind.

Because the flowing water did not stink, it can be determined that this place was not the sewers, but without knowing what this waterway was used for, it was best not to tell Lucifer about the concept of ‘sewers’.

It looked like the both of them had reached a passageway in the middle levels of the stone city.

The constructed ceiling was very high to accommodate the statures of the Ashen Horns, therefore the torches were also installed in very high positions.

The water flowing into the tunnel came from a certain hole near the ceiling, the water flowing out from that place flowed along the drains craved into the passageway and walls, and that cave was connected to a higher level in the city.

“.....Such a strange design.”

Satan said in confusion.

Irrigation systems to send water to higher locations was a lot of work and used up demonic magic.

If it was ‘the world on the other side of the sky’, there were many reasons to transport water to locations at higher elevations, but normally, the demons of the Demon World should not have any reasons to make such a large scale facility.

“But, there should be a reason for this. It doesn’t look like something which was created naturally.”

In this place, they would rather dig drains in the walls and floors for water to

flow. Even if it was naturally flowing water, it would not be a good thing to let water flow within a structure.

In addition, the ones occupying this city were demons who did not need water and food in their daily lives.

“Hey, Satan. What do you plan to do next. Do you want to drill a hole again?”

Lucifer, who noticed that Satan was observing that hole in the ceiling, showed a dirty look, after hesitating for a bit, Satan shook his head and said,

“.....No, it's better to leave it be. We'll go through this path next. Even though we have to move forward, I also mentioned just now that even if we meet members of the Ashen Horns, we definitely cannot kill the other party. Please act according to my instructions.”

“.....Seriously, so strange.”

Even though he did not reject it, Lucifer still look dissatisfied, seeing this, Satan actually thought this instead,

“It looks like it would better to meet an enemy earlier.”

The opportunity came immediately.

In the midst of walking down the huge passageway, the both of them encountered an empty-handed Ashen Horn walking towards them.

Clear sounds of footsteps were heard from the shadows of the flames in front of them, a pair of flashing blue eyes approached them, at this moment, Satan suddenly grabbed Lucifer's hand, and crouched in the corner of the corridor.

A patch of shadow was caused by the torch situated at the Ashen Horn's line of sight, the both of them held their breath and hid in that large patch of shadow.

However, there were no objects to hide behind, as long as the approaching Ashen Horn moved his line of sight in a more careful manner, they will be discovered immediately.

"Lucifer, let me tell you why you cannot fight. Go attack that guy next. But, try your best not to kill him, just strangle his neck from behind for a while."

".....Huh?"

Lucifer frowned at Satan who softly gave him instructions----

".....Sigh, alright."

But perhaps Lucifer could not resist the curiosity of what Satan was thinking when he told him not to fight first, then tell him to attack the next moment, Lucifer started to quietly make his move in the darkness.

".....Hm?"

The Ashen Horn, who came to the corridor, noticed that something big was moving in the edge of his vision and turned his face to that direction, in the next moment----

“Ugah!”

The Ashen Horn clan member was being strangled from behind.

“.....Then, what’s next?”

Naturally, the one doing the strangling was Lucifer, the one he was talking to was not the Ashen Horn, but Satan hiding in the darkness.

The Ashen Horn, who of course did not know about this, opened his mouth in order to alert his comrades that an emergency has occurred and breathed in hard.

“Idiot!”

That Ashen Horn started to panic because someone had forcefully covered his mouth. Of course, the one who covered his mouth and stopped him from speaking, was Satan.

“Currently the attention of the Ashen Horns in this city is focused on Camio and the others outside and they did not discover that we’re here. Causing a huge commotion in other places and not allowing the enemy to know the true purpose of our side seems to be called a ‘diversion’. However, if someone

finds out that we're here, their attention will be turned to us, and the effectiveness of the diversion will be halved. We will end up having fighting a large number of enemies and find it difficult to advance. Wouldn't that be troublesome?"

".....Hmph, I see. Then, why can't I kill anyone?"

"Ugh, pu, uu, uu."

Even though the Ashen Horn whose neck was being strangled seemed to be unable to withstand it anymore, Satan continued to explain.

"It's the same reason as asking you not to fight. Once the killing blow is made, traces of blood and signs of battle will be left behind and increases the chances of us being found out. We cannot allow the Ashen Horns to know that we're here."

"Not just the body, I can kill someone without spilling a drop of blood, you know?"

Lucifer nonchalant words caused the strangled Ashen Horn to spasm once, but it cannot be determined if it was because of fear or simply because he had breathing difficulties.

"Demonic magic and magic will still be used right. In the end, the Ashen Horns will still find out that there are enemies here. And killing off all the Ashen Horns is not our goal."

At this moment, the Ashen Horn between the both of them stopped exerting force and lost consciousness.

Lucifer, who noticed this, let go, and as if he was expecting this, Satan had already moved behind the Ashen Horn, preventing any vibrations and sounds from being created when the huge body hit the ground.

“Listen, Lucifer. In battles, there are ‘methods of victory’ which matches the goal. If we get this wrong, something which could have gone smoothly would also become fraught with setbacks.”

As he spoke, Satan started to drag the large body of the Ashen Horn.

“Hey, what are you doing?”

“We can’t just leave this guy here. I discovered an inconspicuous cave just now, I’m going to put him there.”

This was such that others will not discover the abnormal situation encountered by this Ashen Horn.

“Even so, after that guy wakes up, he would definitely make a fuss about us right.”

“So there is a time limit now. When this guy wakes up, it will be the time the operation ends. Then, I’m going to hide him.”

After saying this, Satan started to pull that huge body back the way they came.

Even Lucifer showed an expression of being unable to accept things, he still turned back and followed Satan, then he let out a gasp like he suddenly remembered something,

“Eh?”

The stature of the Ashen Horn was so tall that the both of them had to look up at him.

In order to strangle the neck of the Ashen Horn from behind, Lucifer had to fly off the ground a little.

On the other hand, Satan had covered the Ashen Horn's mouth before he could shout.

The Satan at that time.....

“That guy, did he float?”

The phrase mountain like body seemed to be created for the sake of the demon in front of them.

The leader of the Ashen Horn clan, Adramelech.

Compared to the Ashen Horn clan warrior Satan and Lucifer met in the stone city, the demonic magic felt from the impressive and dignified appearance of Adramelech was greater and stronger, and completely matched the ‘mutant’ described by Camio.

Because of this dignity, even if two small invaders suddenly barged into the clan leader’s cave in the deepest part of the stone city, Adramelech was not shaken at all.

He only said one sentence.

“How did both of you come here?”

There were two meanings to this question, one of them was how did two demons from other clans enter this stone city with only Ashen Horns; one was after infiltrating this place, how did they drive back the warriors in the city.

Naturally, Lucifer did not reply and only gave a sideways glance towards Satan.

It seemed like he had decided to see how Satan will act.

“We walked over.”

As if it was a natural thing to do, with his normal straightforward attitude, Satan said this to his opponent who concealed an amount of demonic magic which far surpassed his.

“You walked over huh.”

“Yeah.”

“Are you a subordinate of those birds making a ruckus outside?”

“No, technically, those birds are my subordinates. The leader of the group who is causing trouble at your home is me.”

Adramelech, sitting on a stone seat which seemed a little too crude to be called a throne, and only glaring towards Satan,. He naturally sat on this seat only after a long period of time which corresponded to his level of impressiveness and dignity.

Satan, who had not reached a hundred years of age was only an insignificant opponent to him, therefore Adramelech seemed to be using a different method from Lucifer to speculate about Satan’s actual identity.

Adramelech’s nose emitted a foul air, and shifted his gaze like he had shifted his attention outside.

“Hmph. The Demon Bird General of the Pahalo Denino clan has fallen to the

point of being commanded by this kind of brat, he has faltered in his old age.”

“You know Camio?”

Satan was truly surprised at what Adramelech said.

The great leader of the Ashen Horn clan actually said spoke about Camio with something akin to praise, causing Satan to slightly change his impression towards Camio.

However, that would have to wait until they get through this situation.

Even though Adramelech did not seem as impatient as Lucifer, their identities today were as aggressors and invaders.

Even so, Satan could not express his intentions just like this, he never planned to do so from the start.

“Even though the Demon World is vast, there are not many demons like the Demon Bird General who have long lives and are greatly experienced. But because he is too great, he has always lacked in outstanding successors.”

Even though it was not known if these words were praise or criticism, coincidentally, Camio had said the same things before.

Until now, the Pahalo Denino clan had not produced any warriors stronger than Camio.

Therefore, even though he was already old, Camio still had to fight in order to protect the clan, but with just him alone, he would be unable to fight with the clans of the Ashen Horns and Iron Scorpions who have a sizeable number of what is known as mutants and gathered outstanding warriors, so his mighty name was slowly hidden behind the era and blood.

“That stinky old man.....”

Satan and Lucifer did not know Adramelech’s age, but Satan still spoke directly to the bull head who showed a nostalgic expression,

“But, technically, I am his successor. Ashen Horn clan leader Adramelech. I, Satan, as a representative to the Pahalo Denino clan leader Camio, have come to make a request.”

When Satan finished speaking, Adramelech moved the upper half of his body for the first time.

“Ahahahahaha! You’re the representative of the Demon Bird General? What business does a brat like you have with me?”

“.....Such an unexpected reaction.”

Lucifer raised an eyebrow and said this softly.

It seemed like Adramelech felt that Satan’s words were very interesting.

“Small winged man, are you the Lucifer who had been causing trouble at the sandy wastelands before?”

At this moment, Adramelech focused in attention on Lucifer for the first time.

“That’s right. Boss of the Ashen Horns.”

“Just like the rumours said, you do possess an equal amount of power to me. However, you chose to follow this brat, I’m starting to feel curious about the reason.”

Adramelech continued to speak happily,

“Even though you’re just a brat, you successfully pushed back the warriors within the city, so I have to respond appropriately as well.”

This sentence of Adramelech caused Lucifer to widen his eyes in surprise for unknown reasons as he looked at Satan next to him.

Satan also gleefully looked back at Lucifer then immediately turned towards Adramelech.

Even for a demon of Adramelech’s level, his thinking had been influenced by Satan as well. Adramelech had thought that Satan and Lucifer had come here only after fighting with many warriors.

In reality, not just the first demon, they had also met other Ashen Horn warriors within the city, but Lucifer and Satan always worked together to use surprise attacks to knock the warriors out using the minimum amount of power, and until they reached this place, they did not experience any proper battle at all.

Lucifer, with honest feelings of admiration, turned his gaze to Adramelech and nodded lightly.

“Sigh, I understand how you feel. Because I experienced something similar as well. What would this brat say to you, I’m very interested as well.”

“Hmph, Demon Bird General Representative, a brat with a name which could be seen anywhere. If what you say is boring, I will bury your body with my spear on the spot.”

Adramelech got up leisurely as he declared this and moved his thick arm to the back of the throne.

“Uwah, so big.”

After Lucifer saw the thing in Adramelech’s hand, he whistled.

It was a halberd as big as a stone pillar.

The tip of the spear and axe portion made with blue metal matching the status of the leader of the clan must have been bathed in the blood of many demons.

“This is an unparalleled spear passed down through the generations which can pierce through and tear through everything. For a life of a brat like you, would be probably turn to ashes after a light touch.”

Adramelech pointed the tip of the spear at Satan’s throat in a menacing manner and spoke intimidatingly.

However, Satan was not shaken while facing the tip of the spear, he stared at Adramelech’s eyes and said,

“Adramelech, why are you commanding your clan here.”

“What?”

“In order to defeat the Iron Scorpions?”

“I don’t understand the meaning of tis question.”

Even though the expression of the bull head was not easy to read, it can be seen that the confusion and anxiety of Adramelech had increased a little.

“Then let me put it in a simpler way. Adramelech, are you smugly staying here for this land to be taken over by the young members of the Ashen Horn clans in the future, or to be killed off by other demons?”

“Hmph, I am the stongest demon in the Ashen Horn clan. No one in my clan

is stupid enough to want to replace me, and my clan members and I do not allow any outside enemies to invade.”

Adramelech answered like all this was natural, but Satan had already expected this answer.

“Ah, yeah. But after a few hundred years, you would become just like the Demon Bird General who you mentioned just now.”

“Hm?”

“The Demon Bird General Camio is the strongest warrior of the Pahalo Denino clan, an existence such that even you and Lucifer treat him with some respect. But what is it like now? Pressured by the young strong clans, unable to continue staying in one place. On the other hand, no matter how much time has passed, there has been no warriors stronger than Camio appearing within the Pahalo, so the thinking of the clan will not change, Camio’s burden has not decreased at all, forget about flourishing, the numbers of the clan keeps decreasing as Camio grows older. What do you think about this? Are you able to confirm that you and the Ashen Horns clans will not move towards that kind of future? Don’t tell me you’re immortal? Am I right?”

“.....Ugh.”

The thoughtful bull head frowned a little.

“Even though every warrior of the Ashen Horn clans are elite outstanding warriors, compared to the other noble clans, the total population is not much.

If it is a battle of a few against a few, the result will depend on the quality of the warriors, but if it is many against many, the result will depend on the numbers of the warriors. Let me ask you----”

Satan moved his gaze away from Adramelech, and looked accurately towards the east.

“Can you win against the Iron Scorpions? For one on one, the warriors of the Iron Scorpions will not be a match for the Ashen Horns, but their numbers are huge. The only ones who can match them in numbers should only be the Malebranches in the far south.”

“.....Where did that guy get all this information?”

Lucifer mumbled softly, as he knew that he would be interfering no matter what he said, he did not interrupt.

“Because of some reasons, Lucifer is now moving together with us. The large number of vagrant demons living in between the Ashen Horns and Iron Scorpions have also gathered to us, right now there are no other factions between the Ashen Horns and the Iron Scorpions. The war will begin sooner or later. So let me ask you again, do you have any confidence in winning against the Iron Scorpions?”

“A stupid question. My Ashen Horn clan is the strongest in the Demon World. No matter how many poisonous insects come from the east, just depending on numbers, it would be.....”

Satan bluntly interrupted Adramelech who started speaking agitatedly.

“Uh, sorry, that’s not what I’m asking. There are a total of 4,000 Ashen Horn warriors, as for the Iron Scorpion warriors, there are around 20,000. What I want to ask is went you are facing a fighting force five times of your own, how do you plan to fight.”

“This is just a simple calculation question. As long as one demon defeats five enemies.....”

“Everyone has to defeat five demons huh, if they obediently line up in front of your warriors, that would still be alright.”

The battle between demons would naturally develop into a hybrid between physical and magic battles.

Other than the clash of weapons and bodies, there would occasionally be magic attacks launched from a faraway distance.

However, a battle and a competition where certain rules are followed and a fixed number of people battle in a specialized area were different concepts.

There will be largely varying standards in a battle situation, and in an area heavily outnumbered by the enemy, the losses on their end would be larger.

A situation may even arise where an Ashen Horn warrior, who can fight five enemies at once, faces twenty Iron Scorpions at the same time.

Even though it was possible to defeat five enemies in a one on five situation, but when it was one against twenty, perhaps only three could be defeated because of they were being suppressed by the enemy.

“Have you thought of this kind of situation?”

“.....So what are you getting at in the end. Don’t tell me you specially came here in order to ridicule my clan members?”

“No. Even though you just said that just one defeating five enemies would be fine.”

Satan shook his head.

“But if it was me, I am confident that it would be fine as long as one defeats less than one enemy.”

“.....What did you say?”

Adramelech’s expression changed.

“What I mean is if I became the leader of the Ashen Horns, and commanded the clan members under the same conditions as you, I would be able to win the Iron Scorpions with minimal sacrifices to the Ashen Horns.”

“What.....”

The whole atmosphere around Adramelech changed.

Even though until now, Adramelech had thought that he was only catering to the nonsensical remarks of small fry who have secretly barged into this place, that small fry just clearly and directly spat on his qualifications as a leader.

“Hey hey hey.....”

Lucifer, who discovered that Adramelech was really angry, looked towards Satan in a confused manner, but the latter did not waver at all.

It looked like this was within his expectations as well.

“So, leader of the Ashen Horns Adramelech. Do you want to fight a battle with me?”

“You said battle?”

Adramelech, whose killing spirit became fighting spirit swung his pillar-like halberd with force, cutting through the air in the throne hall.

“That’s right. A battle with all the lives of the Ashen Horn clan at stake. You’re not the type who would just allow a brat like me to spout nonsense right?”

Satan smiled boldly,

“Adramelech, I think that the key to deciding the life and death of the whole Ashen Horn clan is during this moment. If I win in this battle, I am going to accept all the Ashen Horn clan warriors!”



“Is he serious.....”

This time, Lucifer was really confused.

Even though Lucifer judged that Adramelech was probably on the same level of power or slightly weaker than him, no matter what, he was obviously an opponent where Satan will not have any way to defeat.

What Lucifer thought next was that he could also be treated as a battle force.

If he seriously fought with Adramelech, there was still a chance of winning.

But at this moment, Satan turned towards Lucifer and asked,

“Are you motivated now?”

“.....It feels like things will become troublesome, so I’m not very motivated.”

Lucifer answered honestly.

Next, Satan said something even more surprising.

“That’s great. Then, back up a little to the entrance. If I lose, you can escape from there directly.”

“Huh?”

Lucifer thought, could it be that Satan did not want to work together with him to handle Adramelech?

Even though he was confused, since it was said that he did not have to act, then Lucifer did not plan to interfere again.

He backed up to the entrance without hesitation and observed the development of the situation.

Seeing this, an evil smile appeared on Adramelech’s bull head mouth.

“You plan to defeat me without Lucifer’s help?”

“That’s right. It’s more like, I already have a 90% chance of victory.”

“Huh?”

That was the undisguised sound of doubt from his comrade Lucifer.

Lucifer really did not think that in this situation, Satan would still be able to avoid fighting with enemies whose abilities far surpass him like what Satan did with him.

“Stop joking, brat! In the past, no one has survived after I swing this demonic spear passed down by the gods of the Ashen Horns!”

Adramelech’s roar was the signal for the start of the battle.

“Hahhh!”

The bull head giant raised the spear which was longer than his own body above his head, brandishing it around, then slammed it upright on the floor.

Then----

“Hm? Water?”

Water actually started to flow out from the places where the halberd hit.

Then in the next moment----

“Ugoh!”

“Wah!”

Satan and Lucifer surveyed the situation within the room in surprise.

The throne which was still made from stone just now had froze instantly.

“.....I see, that water was for this.....”

Satan nodded as he realized this. As if to confirm his deduction further, giant ice pillars from the surrounding walls and floors extended towards Adramelech like thorns and enveloped the whole body of the bull giant in a short amount of time.

Warrior Adramelech, equipped with magical ice armour and an ancient magic spear was actually the top magician skilled in water magic and ice magic.

The water flowing in the waterways around the city was not to satisfy daily living needs. All this water was Adramelech's weapon.

“No matter how overwhelming in numbers the Iron Scorpions are, they will eventually become spirits beneath my spear! Today I will eliminate the interesting small fry who have appeared in my throne hall as an advanced celebration!”

“You admitted that we're interesting huh.”

Satan licked his lips once, and mumbled softly.

“Alright, I’m leaving it to you, stinky old man.”

“Hm?”

Camio who was circling in the air sensed a huge surge in demonic magic within the stone city.

“Is this the power of the current leader of the Ashen Horns.....”

Even though he felt surprised at the demonic magic which obviously surpassed his current capacity, Camio only felt surprised, not shaken.

Because he already knew that this surge of demonic magic will appear.

“Ugh.”

After seeing the state of the Ashen Horn warriors who had come to meet their side head on, Camio could not help but groan once.

The Ashen Horns were obviously shaken because of the swelling demonic magic within the stone city.

The attacks of magic and spears weakened significantly, many warrior troops who came out to meet them frantically rushed back into the city.

It was exactly as what Satan had described.

“It’s the signal! We’re changing formation!”

With things as they are now, Camio decided to stake everything on that young demon.

The warriors of the Pahalo Denino clan who have been flying in a scattered formation and were sporadically launching attacks, started to move in groups of five based on the arrangement of the troops decided beforehand.

“Concentrate on attacking the location where the other party is launching their attacks!”

As part of the Ashen Horn warriors responsible for attacking the sky retreated after sensing abnormalities within the city, the attacks aimed at Camio and the others decreased in quantity, the preventive barrage of spears and magic also became sparse, and from this, they started to be able to calmly deduce the source of the attacks from the air.

The Pahalo warriors who formed into groups started to aim at the launching locations of the enemies and shot demonic magic bullets.

“Be careful not to kill them!”

Following Satan’s instructions, Camio started to systematically defeat the Ashen Horn warriors who stayed to fight them.

Even though the Ashen Horn warriors fought hard on their own and planned to defeat the Pahalo troops who flew in groups of five, their arrows, spears and demonic magic orbs were unable to hit the flight formation of the Pahalo who gathered one moment and dispersed the next.

On the contrary, the attacks from the sky of the Pahalo warriors were rapidly increasing in accuracy, and the amount of firepower to hit the Pahalo in return became more and more sparse.

“It’s about time.”

After confirming that the reactions around the stone city have mostly disappeared, Camio issued another signal.

“Reinforce the entrances of the stone city!”

The Pahalo warriors descended rapidly, precisely choosing the caves which can lead to the inside from the countless empty city windows or holes, then landed in front of them.

The reason why they were unable to distinguish between the important cave openings and the unimportant cave openings because they observed the movements of the Ashen Horn warriors when they returned within the city.

The Pahalo warrior troops were sucked in a straight line to the caves which served as entrances which definitely would lead into the city.

Camio also led two troops and entered one of the caves.

Even if the interior passageways were narrow and winding, they were still passageways dug out to match the burly statures of the Ashen Horn clan.

It was no problem at all for the Pahalo Denino, who were much smaller than the Ashen Horn clan in size, to fly.

“T, they’re coming!”

“What are the guys outside doing?”

“W, what do we do! Quickly go to the clan leader’s room!”

“We can’t just ignore the invaders!”

On the other hand, the Ashen Horn clan had already completely descended into panic.

Just their clan leader suddenly entering battle mode was already a problem.

Just as their attention was attracted by those birds in the sky, their clan leader was fighting with someone.

However, during the instant they planned to respond to that, this time it was the birds defeating the demons outside and invading the interior.

None of the Ashen Horns present could judge which side had higher priority.

“Hm, so this is ‘the difference in command structure’? Uhmnnnnnn!”

Compared to the Ashen Horn clan who had completely lost their command, even though it cannot be helped, but through the small number of elite who transmitted the orders to everyone, the Pahalo were very skilled in fighting enemies sturdier than themselves.

In addition, even though he was already growing old, but the ability of the once famous Demon Bird General was currently much stronger than the average Ashen Horn warrior.

The slash attacks of Camio, boosted by his flying speed, shattered the weapons of four Ashen Horns who met him head on----

“Hahhhhh!”

And he also sliced through their leg muscles at the same time, taking away their mobility.

“This place is alright now! On to the next area!”

After Camio confirmed that the four of them had hit the ground, he led the two troops further down the corridor.

Even if the tunnels within the city intersect and were complex, the separately flying Pahalo Deninos had been using Idea Link which Camio was good at to grasp each other's location, so they gradually gained an insight into the structure of the interior.

“Hey! Those birds have infiltrated the city! Quickly prepare the short spears for close combat.....uwahhhh?”

On the other hand, the Ashen Horns who were not pursued by the Pahalo Deninos were facing other threats.

“W, what’s wrong! What happened?”

The room which was used as a weapon storeroom, or in the shadows of the corridors leading to the clan leader’s room, various inconspicuous places, unconscious Ashen Horns were discovered one after another.

Even though these Ashen Horns seemed to have no external injuries, all of them were unconscious, it was obvious that they were beaten by someone in situations where they were unable to put up a resistance.

Naturally, all these were the demons subdued by Satan and Lucifer as they sneakily headed towards Adramelech’s room.

Even though these numbers were not considered a lot, because these methods were obvious different from the Pahalo Denino clan, so after this information was passed to the Ashen Horns who have lost almost all structure, it immediately mutated into a rumour of intruders other than the Pahalo Denino clan killing large number of warriors, and spread within the warriors inside the city.

“D, don’t tell me the one fighting with the clan leader right now is.....”

“A terrifying demon who is able to kill so many warriors without anyone noticing.....”

Even though bull head giants gathering together and being frantica and afraid was really amusing, the warriors on the outside of the city have been defeated by the Pahalo Denino one after another, and their clan leader was fighting with an unknown character.

“A, anyway, let’s quickly go to the clan leader’s cave!”

Therefore, the Ashen Horns who were safe made this judgement, and when they rushed to the location where Adramelech was at, close to half of the warriors within the city have been defeated.

Then, the one who spoke in a threatening manner to the Ashen Horns who practically escaped into the clan leader’s room----

“Wah! Who are all of you? It’s getting to a good point right now, don’t interfere!”

While showing a ready to fight expression unlike at the beginning, was Lucifer.

Many of them who saw that petite body and fully black wings, as well as that cruel expression, already recognized Lucifer’s identity, however before they

could feel alarmed about why the strongest vagrant demon would appear here----

“Ohhhh?”

The shocked voice of Adramelech himself could be heard from the clan leader’s cave.

Then the Ashen Horns saw it.

The instant Adramelech’s magic ice armour, which was said to only be breakable using the magic spear of the clan leader himself, shattering.

Rewinding the time a little.

The one who attacked first was Satan’s side.

“Hah!”

It was a totally normal attack using demonic magic bullets.

Light bullets were shot out from Satan's small ten fingers, but Adramelech took the attacks head on and did not dodge at all. Because there was no need to do so.

“Did you do something just now?”

The magic ice armour which was hit directly but Satan's light bullets did not show any signs of damage.

Even though the colour of the surface changed a little because of the high temperature, it was immediately covered by the newly formed magic ice.

“Sigh, I did launch an attack right?”

Satan showed a stiff expression, and took one step back.

“Then I can attack a bit too right?”

After saying this, Adramelech waved his magic spear at Satan with a vigorous speed which did not match his burly physique at all.

“Ugwahhh!”

Satan barely dodged the attack by jumping backwards. However, even though he dodged successfully, the wind generated by the spear tip caused him to lose balance in the air, and he fell in an exaggerated manner.

“Damn it!”

Even though Satan shot out demonic magic orbs in an unnatural position in order to avoid being attacked the instant he fell over, it was unable to stop Adramelech’s movements at all.

“Even though you’re only at this level, you still dare to challenge me.”

A voice was heard next to Satan.

“Don’t make me laugh!”

The second attack towards Satan was a horizontal sweep just like the trajectory of the first attack, but because it used the centrifugal force of the first attack, the speed and power increased overwhelmingly.

“.....He’s doomed this time.”

Lucifer correctly predicted the future of two seconds later.

From this timing, it really could not be dodged.

Lucifer and Adramelech strongly believed this one attack comprising of Adramelech's strong arm power, the hardness of the magic spear and demonic ice magic would shatter Satan's small body.

However----

“Hohaaahhh!”

This voice was heard from a place further away from the space where the halberd was swinging down towards.

“Hm?”

After Adramelech, who did not expect the other party to still be alive, widened his eyes in surprise, he noticed that a nosebleeding Satan, in a posture of using his arms to block, was floating in the air some distance away from the tip of the spear which was swung downwards.

“It huurrtts!”

The purple light emitting from Satan's palm hit Adramelech's armour once again.

“Hmph!”

But as expected, Adramelech was not concerned at all and let Satan's attack hit as he aimed in the direction of the spear tip and swung his left fist.

Even if this fist was swung towards Satan, even Lucifer who was watching from far away could feel the wind pressure.

The fist which contained such terrifying power seemed to have hit Satan directly.

In reality, Satan was sent flying far away and hit the wall.

“Hm?”

However, the attacking Adramelech showed an expression of confusion.

“Aiyeeeeeee.....”

“.....He's still alive.”

Lucifer was truly surprised.

When Satan was not taken down by the second spear attack, he had thought it was a miracle. But the fist Adramelech swung next obviously did not allow

any time to dodge, and in actuality, Satan was really sent flying by that fist. That fist contained enough power to shatter all the bones in the body to kill someone before they hit the wall.

“Brat, you really know how to use those moves well.”

“Heh, t, thanks for, the compliment.....owowow.”

But forget about being smashed into pieces, Satan actually stood up on the spot.

Even though he was bleeding from his nose, ears and abdomen, to lose so little blood after that attack from Adramelech actually made it all the more mysterious.

“Hey, Satan, what you just.....”

Even though it was surprising to see Satan safe, Lucifer asked about something else he just realized instead.

“Ah.....you noticed? I unexpectedly used it rather well right?”

Before he was sent flying by Adramelech, Satan shot up purple heat rays.

That was the magic Lucifer was skilled in.

“My body, has to be, trained a little more. Flying with that speed, is a huge burden, to the body.”

Satan exhaled deeply and started to focus his consciousness on his hand.

“Sorry for the wait, come, let us continue.”

After saying this, Satan walked straight towards Adramelech once again.

“.....Come!”

Adramelech swung his spear for the third time.

The magic spear accurately matched the trajectory of Satan’s surprise attack and stabbed forwards. Next, Satan’s field of vision was suddenly blocked.

“In front of my spear move, Magic Ice Canopy, gimmicks like just now will not work.”

The attack which resembled a huge ice umbrella blocked Satan’s way completely.

Of course, it did not simply extend the ice block outwards. The surface of the umbrella aimed towards Satan started to produce countless ice blades, then broke away from the umbrella surface to attack Satan simultaneously.

“Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!”

Even when faced with hundreds of ice blades, Satan did not show any fear.

“It’s used this way right!”

Going with the force of rushing forward, Satan rolled forwards and pressed one hand against the ground.

Then in the next moment, as if it was buried in the ground from the beginning, Satan actually pulled out a sword from the ground.

“W, what is that?”

“Hm?”

Lucifer and Adramelech got a shock from Satan’s mysterious move.

But that was not the only surprising thing.

Satan rushed into the huge numbers of short ice blades, hitting them down with the blade he just produced while beginning to launch a surprise attack at Adramelech, just like that.

“W, what?”

In order to pierce through Satan’s body, the hundreds of short ice blades animated via ice magic were naturally shot out at high speeds.

However, the young demon saw through the trajectories of the short blades and broke through the barrier of the Magic Ice Canopy with a few scratches.

“Heh!”

Adramelech hesitated slightly because of shock, Satan took the chance to launch Lucifer’s move at the chest area of the magic ice armour, Purple Heat Rays.

Adramelech intentionally ignored this move and used the handle of the spear to block the sword Satan swung after closing in.

But at this moment, Adramelech saw another surprising fact.

“T, that sword is.....ice?”

That item which looked like a blade was actually just a simple rod made from ice.

Even though it also contained demonic magic, compared with Adramelech's magic ice armour, there was a vast difference in strength, even if he was hit by this small rod, it would be unable to cause much damage.

Even so, Adramelech could not hide his surprise.

After all, Adramelech had already let demonic magic spread over the ice and water in his room to bring these things under his control.

Until now, this ice has never been interfered with or snatched away by the enemy.

“For a first time, it's considered quite good right!”

After a brief confrontation, Satan actively increased the distance between himself and Adramelech, then using his own power, he shattered the ice rod which had greatly surprised Adramelech.

But after the ice shattered, it did not fall on the ground or melt.

But floated in the air around Satan as if they were protecting him----

“Go!”

Then attacked Adramelech.

Those ice bullets were only half the size of Satan’s fist. They would not cause much damage even if they did hit.

However, Satan had already used many surprising moves which were out of Adramelech’s expectations.

Therefore, Adramelech, no longer acting careless, did not underestimate these ice bullets and planned to use his spear to strike them down.

The noise of the impact of metal against ice was continuously heard at the scene.

“Damn it!”

The sound which was produced next, was the angry roar of Adramelech.

The ice blocks which were shattered by the spear did not dissipate, but attacked Adramelech’s eyes directly.

Even if it was ice shards which resembled fine glass fragments, because there were traces of Satan's demonic magic on them, the consequences of being hit in the eyes were unthinkable.

Of course, as Adramelech's body was far stronger than the normal Ashen Horn, if there was only demonic magic of Satan's level on the ice, perhaps he would be able to avoid the ice shards damaging the eyeballs by closing his eyes.

But Adramelech did not do so.

Even if it was just an instant, if he did not watch Satan closely, who knew what other strange moves he would use next.

Adramelech jumped back while watching Satan, pulling back a huge distance to avoid the ice fragments.

“Tsk.....as expected, it won't go that smoothly.”

Satan felt regretful because his plan failed, but in the eyes of the bystander Lucifer, even if it was just an instant, just being able to make that Adramelech back up on his own was already something worth marveling at.

Even though the situation looked like Adramelech was playing into the hands of others, talking about the injuries on the body, it was obvious that Satan was more badly hurt.

The reason why Satan was still alive after getting hit by the horizontal slash and left punch, must be because he 'flew' in the direction of movement of the spear and the fist.

Even though it was said that not confronting force and force will reduce the damage, it was still the spear and fist swung by the strongest of the Ashen Horns, Adramelech.

That force could not be absorbed completely. Just flying to catch up and the power of the wind pressure was enough to cause harm to Satan's fragile body.

Forcing one's own body to fly at a reckless speed was an action which would cause an extremely great burden on the body.

Even if he dodged it, he could not avoid getting hurt. This was the current difference in ability between Adramelech and Satan which was difficult to overcome regardless of what was done.

But even if he recognized this difference in ability, Adramelech still increased the distance between him and Satan by his own violation.

Satan caused this giant to feel that he would be in danger if he did not reorganize his stance.

What was most surprising for Lucifer was that Satan, who did not know how to use flying magic a few days ago, actually flew when he battled against Adramelech.

“I was too careless.”

After Adramelech said this, he lightly swung his halberd to replenish the water content used by the magic ice umbrella.

“This moves which even I have not seen before are rather interesting.”

“Is that so? For the leader of the Ashen Horns to say this, it’s an honour.”

“But since you keep using strange moves, that means that you know that you’re not my match in a direct confrontation.”

Adramelech assumed a battle stance after he said this, and breathed in with force.

“Time for the games to end. I have already recognized you as a warrior who I should use my full power against.”

According to his declaration, Adramelech increased his demonic magic once again to increase the thickness of the magic ice armour.

“I will not be careless anymore. Experience the might of the hardest armour which will not lose to the shell of the iron scorpions!”

The range of coverage of the magic ice armour on Adramelech’s body started to increase slowly.

The temperature in the throne hall instantly increased, all the magic ice was sucked onto Adramelech’s body, and totally covered his huge stature like a whole set of full body armour.

“Fuuuuuuuuuu!”

Not just the face Satan was just aiming at, the bull head giant which he had to look up to see became an ice giant in the blink of an eye.

“Be prepared!”

“Owahhhh!”

Without caring if the low voice between the ice face mask could be heard, Adramelech closed in until he was in front of Satan with a speed comparable to before.

Even if such dense ice was attached to such a huge body, his speed did not decrease at all.

Satan hastily avoided the attacks by dodging to the side, but Adramelech lightly swung in the direction Satan was escaping in.

Then, as if Adramelech's arm had extended, sharp ice pillars grew out from the ground and attacked Satan suddenly.

“Damn it!”

Satan used the purple heat rays to attack the ice pillars approaching him.

“Tsk!”

The weak slender rays were absorbed by the highly transparent ice blocks and dissipated without even melting the tips of the ice pillars.

“Uwah, uwah, uwahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!”

“There's no escape!”

As if the clamp down on the Satan who was avoiding the ice pillars with all his might, Adramelech's huge body moved ahead of the trajectories of the ice pillars with astonishing speed.

“Owah!”

Satan frantically shot heat rays, but Adramelech with an ice block even thicker than before enveloping him, completely ignored this attack and swung his spear horizontally, intending to give Satan a fatal strike.

The movement this time was smaller. Even though Satan’s battle tactics were outstanding, this stamina and demonic magic would not match up to Adramelech at all.

If so, there was no need to execute large range of movements with full power. This was not done out of contempt or carelessness, this attack with just the right amount of force to kill Satan which would be a sure strike without any openings.

Satan also actually sensed Adramelech’s intentions.

Even if he sensed it, in the eyes of the bystander Lucifer, he did not think that Satan would be able to turn his situation around.

Behind him were the quickly approaching magic ice pillars, in front of him was Adramelech’s magic spear.

Satan, who was in a life threatening crisis, took one single action which was to shoot out the heat rays once again.

Among the attacks Satan executed, the only one which did not show any effect and did not even attract Adramelech's attention was the heat rays which were copied from Lucifer, and the heat rays this time were unable to affect Adramelech's lunge after all.

“Are you at your wit's end! Die!”

At this timing, the attack will definitely hit.

No, even if it did not hit, Adramelech was not the type of warrior which can be handled just by simply using one kind of dodging method continuously.

He intentionally left a lot of room, no matter how Satan dodged, he would be able to pursue Satan.

But----

“I don't want to.”

Adramelech did not expect that Satan would actually turn around.

“What?”

The unexpected action of the small demon caused Adramelech to respond slowly. Did that back represent surrender, escape or giving up, Adramelech's mind ran through all the possibilities.

However, Satan's intentions were not among any of those.

“Ugh!”

Satan actually allowed the ice pillar approaching from behind which was aiming at his side to pierce through his body.

“W, what?”

“Hey?”

With this, even Lucifer watching on the sidelines got a huge shock, and he almost uncrossed his arms which were originally calmly crossed in front of him to rush forward, however, the battle was still ongoing.

“It hurrtrttss!”

Even if he was screaming from pain, Satan still used his arms to tightly grab onto the ice pillar which had pierced through him and flew backwards just like that----flying towards Adramelech.

With the addition of the propulsion of the ice pillar which pierced him, faster than Adramelech expected, Satan closed the distance between the both of them, then he bravely used what seemed like the most useless move so far, ‘causing the collision of bodies using the weapon conjured behind his back by the enemy’.

Of course, Adramelech would not be so stupid as to be pierced by the magic ice he created, and thinking that it was Satan’s ruse of inflicting an injury on himself to win the confidence of the enemy, Adramelech tried to change the trajectory of the ice.

“?”

But the one who was surprised once again was still Adramelech.

The trajectory of the ice did change. But the change was limited to only the bottom half of the ice pillar.

Only the part pierced through Satan separated from the original ice pillar with a sharp sound and slammed towards Adramelech together with Satan.

The front part of the ice pillar which should have moved according to Adramelech’s demonic magic, did not follow Adramelech’s will.

“Ugohhhhhhhh!”

Even if his body was pierced through, Satan still let out a roar. The front part of the ice pillar carrying his body slammed into Adramelech's body without decelerating at all. Then----

“It, it can't be.....”

Lucifer gasped in surprise.

Just from the appearance, Adramelech was hugging the small Satan from behind like a father.

The magic ice armour enveloping Adramelech started to crack.

The cracks, with Satan's side abdomen at the center, travelled one round from Adramelech's chest to back, and then the full body armour split into two, the next moment, the magic ice armour shattered into fine shards like diamond powder.

“H, how can this be.....”

Adramelech expressed his disbelief in what just happened once again.

The ice which had gathered from Adramelech's demonic magic should not have shattered so easily.

Basically, during the battle with Satan, none of the magic or sword was able to damage the magic ice armour, and Adramelech did not remember taking any impact which would be enough to crack the armour into half.

But in reality, the small sized Satan, just by slamming into Adramelech with the ice pillar pierced through him, had caused the full body armour of the Ashen Horn clan leader to crack open.

“The thing about ice is that it was become very brittle once one place starts to crack.”

When he came to his senses, Adramelech realized that Satan who had collapsed in his arms was explaining with a groan.

“As long as the same place was precisely attacked continuously and hit hard with something like ice or something harder than ice in the end, it would be easily broken. I heard that in some place, there are living things who gather ice just like this to live. Hey, Adramelech.....don't you want to see, the guys who can do something like that.....?”

Faced with this overly surprising circumstance, Adramelech and Lucifer were unable to follow the situation, and the Ashen Horn warriors who were pushed back by the Pahalo Denino clan from outside, were forced into the throne hall at this time.

“Wah! Who are all of you? It's getting to a good point right now, don't interfere!”

Lucifer turned in surprise towards the Ashen Horn warriors who looked like reinforcements.

“If you dare to get in the way, I will be your opponent. It’s getting exciting right now, would all of you be quiet!”

Even though they did not say anything at all, with this, the Ashen Horns really did not know how to react to Lucifer who had suddenly appeared.

But as they frantically looked toward their clan leader, they happened to witness the moment the magic ice armour crack into half and shatter.

The armour of the clan leader, the strongest of the Ashen Horns, shattered.

And from this situation, the one who did this was obviously not Lucifer, but the mysterious young demon.

“What method did you use to interfere with the armour which was filled with my demonic magic.”

“Uh.....ugh.....very simply, using light, heat and a wedge, plus a little, of my demonic magic.....cough.....”

Satan said while being in pain.

“As long as I carefully, let the heat rays, hit the same place, causing a temperature change using the heat rays, and repeatedly let you use your demonic magic to condense it again, then only the density of the ice, at that portion, would be different, from the other places, then, as long as I use a wedge, to pierce within it with a large force.....yeah, wedge, is this. Using the same trick as, when I made the ice rod, making the ice which passed through my body, to become mine.....”

Satan spoke as he knocked against the ice pillar which pierced through his side abdomen, then frowned once again because of the small vibrations which were transmitted to his body.

“Other than that, in order to prevent the cracked places from recovered, I made the water drops, aiming for your face, and my blood, infiltrate the cracks, to cause interference. Hey, Adramelech.”

Satan looked up at Adramelech while breathing raggedly.

“Even I, with a rubbish amount of demonic magic.....based on the battle method, am able to battle with you to this extent.....then, if you can use a shrewder method of battle than now, you would definitely, handle the Iron Scorpions more easily. The name of the Ashen Horns will stir up the Demon World. Since you’re the clan leader, then don’t make your clan members die in vain. Hey, do you want to, lead everyone, with me and see, greater things.....because, I’m weaker than you, if you’re not satisfied, you can, kill me and leave, anytime.....”

“You.....”

Adramelech, in a calm tone completely different from when he was fighting, asked a question to the small demon.

“plan to use us to annihilate the Iron Scorpions?”

“.....Haha, sigh, I don’t expect you to understand immediately.....yeah, I look forward to your power, but, it’s not to annihilate the Iron Scorpions.....guh!”

Even though Satan, speaking in a weak voice, still wanted to continue talking, the damage throughout his whole body caused his physical body to begin crying out in pain.

If he was not treated properly soon, Satan might just pass away soon.

“Hey, Ashen Horn boss, let that guy go. If you think that you haven’t fought enough, I can help you with that.”

“.....Lucifer.”

Adramelech's gaze shifted, and he looked towards Lucifer whose unmotivated appearance from just now had disappeared without a trace and now clearly showing an intention to fight.

“Honestly, until just now, I was thinking that it doesn't matter regardless of what happens, but right now, I'm really getting interested in that guy. Because that guy looks like he will do more interesting things, I hope he would live a little longer. If you refuse, I will have to use heat rays against you which are a few hundred times stronger than that guy's.”

“.....”

Adramelech did not respond immediately, and only looked down at the small demon who was coughing up blood in his arms.

At this moment----

“Uwahhhh!”

“Lord Adramelech! The enemies are coming!”

Sounds of battle could now be heard from the passageway leading to the throne hall.

This meant that the Pahalo Denino clan have mostly suppressed the whole city.

Even if the demons feeling shocked at Lucifer's boldness rushed in directly, Adramelech was not shaken at all.

“Satan! Lucifer! Are the both of you alright!”

At this moment, leading his troops which did not decrease in numbers and reaching this place, Camio flew in.

“Hm?”

After he discovered Satan covered in blood and collapsed in Adramelech's arms, Camio's eyes were immediately filled with rage and he pointed the tip of his sword towards Adramelech.

“Ashen Horn leader! Please let go of that brat! If you feel that you have not fought enough, I, Camio, will be your opponent!”

Camio's tone, filled with a seasoned aura, made the completely same declaration as Lucifer, causing Adramelech to move a little.

“Well known Demon Bird General Camio. Is this brat Pahalo's hidden trump card?”

“Hmph, this stinky brat, is not suited to be my clan member at all. That demon.....”

Camio tilted his sword forward, opened his mouth, and said,

“holds the possibility of changing the Demon World!”

“Changing the Demon World.....”

“Even though I still don’t know how he wants to change it, this city has fallen into the hands of the Pahalo Denino clan as planned by Satan. And I believe that almost no fatalities have occurred.”

“Is that actually possible.”

“That is what was instructed by that brat. He told us to defeat the ones who resist with all our might, but we definitely cannot kill anyone.”

Adramelech closed his eyes.

“Is that, the ‘methods of victory’?”

The words of the young demon of a fraction of his age echoed in his mind once again.

“.....Then, what does this brat plan to do using my power?”

Camio and Lucifer could not help but exchange looks with one another.

Even if this was the road they reached on their own, their expressions still showed their disbelief.

That Adramelech, was actually planning to surrender to Satan.

“Anyway, as long as all of you are here, we would be able to confront the Iron Scorpions directly.”

As if waiting for this sentence, heavily injured and on the brink of death, Satan opened his eyes with force and shouted,

“Hey, Adramelech, and Camio and Lucifer, all of you are stronger than me. I had told the both of them that if they are dissatisfied, they can kill me anytime. You can do so as well. So, just for now.....”

Satan, like he was really going to cough up blood soon, said the words encompassing his soul to the bull head giant.

“come play with me.”

At this moment, Adramelech and the Ashen Horns, decided to act according to Satan Jacob’s intentions.

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“Didn’t I already say that it’s too early!”

“Annoying! Have you ever heard of godly speed being important in troops!”

“What godly speed! Where do we find troops like that!”

(T/N: Actually the phrase Satan used meant speed being important in military tactics, but given the way Camio responded, I used the less accurate and more literal translation instead.)

“Have you finally gone senile? Is your brain alright? Haven’t we already obtained such an unprecedented number of fighting power?”

“Shut up! This cannot be termed as fighting power! It’s just numbers! I thought you would calm down a little after bleeding, but unexpectedly, you became more hot blooded instead, stinky brat!”

“You’re noisy, senile old man! If you’re not careful, I’ll end your era right now!”

“Such a big mouth, brat! Wishing to rebuke me with that body of yours, you’re a hundred years too early, stinky brat!”

“What did you say!”

“What!”

“.....What’s up with that.”

“It’s actually considered a rather frequent occurrence.”

The low level debate between Satan and Camio which looked like a quarrel no matter what caused Adramelech’s originally round eyes to become even rounder.

But to Lucifer, this was a scene which he had recently gotten tired of seeing, so he was not particularly concerned about it.

The location of the stone city of the Ashen Horns.

In the clan leader’s cave where Adramelech and Satan fought a fierce battle, Satan, Camio, Lucifer and Adramelech were discussion their future plans, but

even though the injuries from his battle with Adramelech had not healed, Satan was already anxious to fight with the Iron Scorpion clan, therefore Camio was currently stopping him with all his might.

Adramelech, who felt admiration for Satan's words and his battle tactics used to compensate his ability, decided to agree to Satan's 'invitation to play', and at this point of time, the force which can be called Satan's comrades had increased more than five times compared to before.

Even though the Pahalo Denino clan originally had about 500 warriors, and there were more than 100 vagrant demons who were assimilated before Lucifer, just counting the warriors in the Ashen Horn clan, there were 4000 of them.

As Lucifer and Adramelech were considered strong fighting forces who could go against a thousand enemies, so regardless of the total capacity of demonic magic or the number of troops, they have definitely reached a rather rare scale.

Of course, Satan's forces also included non-combat members from various clans, but as demons of the Demon World, they were already prepared to use swords and demonic magic in the worse case scenario.

But once the numbers increased so much, some faults will naturally occur.

“Listen well, brat! The reason why you're still alive is because Lucifer and Lord Adramelech are reasonable demons, alright? Honestly, if only power is

considered, you're not even a match for the Ashen Horn's small fry! Do you even know this!"

"So what! When we battle the Iron Scorpions next time, I will no longer suddenly start a battle with the leader like this time, did I tell you this already? Adramelech also agreed! He wants me to command all the demons who are gathered here."

"Ugh, yeah."

Satan suddenly threw the topic to Adramelech and the latter could not help but nod.

Satan's next goal was naturally to deal with the large faction in the north of the Demon World, the Iron Scorpions, together with the Ashen Horns.

With things as they are now, Camio and Lucifer had already guessed that Satan's purpose was not to annihilate, but to concillate the enemy.

But right now, or rather Camio strongly believed that because it was right now, they were unable to achieve this.

"Look! Since Adramelech already said this, the Ashen Horns will definitely....."

“You idiot!”

Camio bluntly rebuked Satan’s opinion.

“So what if you depend on Adramelech’s power and influence? Lucifer and Adramelech are only interested in your innovative thinking, and have not truly pledge allegiance to us! They are only the covenant parties to the ‘alliance’ you mentioned!”

“Y, yeah?”

“What will you do if the demons of the Ashen Horns say that they do not wish to listen to your command at a crucial moment? Even though you won your fight with Lord Adramelech, that’s only because Lord Adramelech was willing to think of it that way, this definitely does not mean that you surpass him in terms of power!”

“T, that’s true.....”

“I am willing to admit that you have a sharp mind! But! The more troops you have under you, the more power you would need to lead them. You said that you were going to build an ‘organisation’ next right! But with just the commanding power of a weak demon like you, are you able to freely command 5000 demons and 20,000 Iron Scorpions to fight?”

When he said this, Satan also started to understand Camio’s worries.

“Ah~I see, you have a point.”

“A weak general will directly reflect the weakness of the whole group. This is different from commanding the Pahalo Denino who have been under my command for many years. For you to be willing to involve the Iron Scorpions, you must have some goal right? Therefore, right now is the time to cultivate your abilities and quietly wait for an opportunity! With your current ability, it is not enough for you to be able to fully make use of your intelligence!”

“.....”

Satan, who rarely lost to Camio in a debate, pouted, but just this time, Camio’s opinions garnered agreement.

“Sigh, the old man makes a reasonable point.”

“Lucifer! I don’t remember allowing you to address me as old man.....!”

“Satan, when you were almost hit by Adramelech’s spear, you did say that you got hurt because you could not withstand your own flying speed right. That won’t do. It’s too pathetic after all.”

When the things which occurred during the dodging of Adramelech’s first spear attack was pointed out, Satan became silent once again.

“Ughhh.....”

“Yeah, then let me say some things as well. No matter how careful the calculations are, executing a counterattack with the willingness to die is still an inadvisable tactic in battle. At least it isn’t an action a leader should take.”

Adramelech should be referring to the attack where Satan allowed the ice pillar to pierce himself to use that to break the armour.

Having three demons point out three different mistakes caused Satan to momentarily become speechless.

“Hey, I want to ask you one thing.”

“.....What.”

Lucifer asked Satan who had lapsed into silence.

“When did you start being able to fly?”

“.....Huh?”

“And that heat ray. That’s my technique right? What’s is going on? Before you came here, what did you do?”

“.....Oh, that thing.”

Even though he was throwing a slight tantrum because he lost to the three older demons, because he understood that Lucifer's question was praising him in some way, he replied rather proudly,

“I just tried to imitate them. Based on observation, experience and feeling, after carrying out various trials in my brain, I realized that flying was unexpectedly easy. But the power of the heat rays should be a lot weaker than the ones used by Lucifer.....”

“You said imitate the magic of the other clans?”

The one who expressed surprise at this answer was Adramelech.

“Then let me ask you, don't tell me the ice rod magic you used when fighting with me was.....”

“Oh, about that, because you used an amazing technique, I wanted to try to imitate it. Even though I wanted to make a sharp sword, but just copying what was done won't produce good results after all.”

“.....That kind of thing, can it be done?”

“Sigh, but this guy really did it.....even though I have not heard of such a thing before.”

Adramelech and Lucifer held a certain pride with regards to how long they

lived, but they have never seen a demon like Satan who was skilled at copying.

“This brat has really been going through various kinds of training since young. Perhaps he’s really good at learning from other people.”

Demons teaching other clans.

Even though this happened very naturally between Satan and Camio, this was a miraculous scene which had never occurred before in the Demon World.

And Satan planned to create this miracle again.

“Oh yeah! Hey! I’m already tired of Camio’s teachings, taking this opportunity, the both of you can teach me how to fight!”

““Huh?””

Lucifer and Adramelech shouted out in surprise at the same time.

“What do you mean by tired of my teachings, you brat!”

Camio became agitated once again.

In the end, Adramelech and Lucifer were not fully supportive of Satan like Camio.

And it had not even been two days since Adramelech verbally agreed to work together with Satan.

“.....Hm, this might be good.”

““Eh?””

So when Adramelech unexpectedly showed a proactive reaction, it was Lucifer’s and Camio’s turn to voice out their surprise.

“Even though it only appears that way, my Ashen Horn clan did lose to Satan this time. However, within the Ashen Horn clan, there are still many who think that I did not lose to Satan, but to the forces of Lord Camio and Lucifer.”

“Then again, I have been bothered by it since just now, why are the both of you only addressing me directly by name?”

Lucifer’s insignificant question was ignored on the spot.

“But if other demons know that the one who would be responsible as the ‘commander’ in the future, in other words, the one who defeated us, was actually a weak demon, it might cause dissatisfaction and desertion.”

Adramelech nodded to affirm his own words, and stood up idly.

“If the man who will command I, Adramelech, and the Ashen Horns in future, is so weak, it is also rather troubling. I need to find some way to make him become stronger.”

“Ah! Then again, I’m also a little bothered that even though this guy is very weak, he would just lecture me on a whim.”

“H, hey, b, both of you?”

Adramelech’s and Lucifer’s strangely sharp gazes caused Satan to shrink back a bit, and at this moment, another new gaze was directed at Satan.

“Yeah, since this guy already said that he’s tired of my teachings, and he also seemed to have become a little arrogant recently because things were going too smoothly. It seems like temporarily handling the brat to both of you to teach is a rather good idea.”

“Ca, Camio?”

“Oh my, relax, we still have a little interest in what you want to do in the future.”

“We won’t kill you. At most, we’ll put you on the brink of death.”

“Ehhhhhhhhhhhhhh, wait, at least wait until my injuries are healed.....!”

“Didn’t you just say that you were going to take advantage of this opportunity to attack the Iron Scorpions? It’s fine.”

“Lucifer is right. Let me think, let me find some guys who are still harbouring resentment from losing to Pahalo in the earlier attack.”

“Hey hey hey hey hey hey hey hey hey hey hey hey!”

Camio flapped his wings as he watched Satan being dragged away to someplace in the stone city by a large and small figure.

“Now.....since I have been addressed as the Demon Bird General by Lord Adramelech, I need to produce some results as well.”

After saying this, Camio summoned around 20 Pahalo Denino warriors and disappeared to some place together with them.

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“Vagrant demon of the sandy wastelands?”

Deep within the dark cave, a confirmatory low sound was heard.

“Yes. Lucifer had suddenly disappeared. And he also defeated a few members of our Iron Scorpion warrior troops.....”

“Did he fly to some other place.....”

“Because the members who have recently come into contact with Lucifer were all killed, the details could not be confirmed.....cough, ah, c, clan leader.....”

The young Iron Scorpion who was still reporting suddenly showed a pained expression.

A suffocating tension normally caused by demonic magic controlled the darkness of the cave.

“You specially came here in order to convey this kind of unimportant thing?”

“N, no, t, that, erhm, a, ahhh.....cough.....f, fu!”

At this instant, the demonic magic filled the cave disappeared.

The young voice which was reporting, gasped deeply like he was released from a certain strong power, and answered to voice which had given orders,

“Re, reporting! That, around the location where we last observed Lucifer’s demonic magic, we discovered strange tracks.”

“.....?”

“It was a footprint. It was footprints which did not belong to us or the Ashen Horns, and extended from the south all the way of the sandy wastelands where Lucifer was located.”

“The south of the sandy wastelands.....the land of the giant stone nest of the demon birds?”

“Yes. Even though the footprints were obviously different from the Pahalo Denino clan.....”

“Has Lucifer sided with the demon birds?”

“The lowly me knows it’s hard to believe, but I judged that this movement should still be reported to you, the clan leader.”

“.....I will remember it. Dismissed.”

“Yes!”

In the darkness, a male voice as sharp as a blade commanded the young reporting voice to leave.

“Is it possible for that ruffian to side with other clans.....?”

The demon addressed as the clan leader got up idly from the dark cave, then his body floated up lightly to move outside through the skylight in the cave.

In the mountain range where strong winds howled, there was an especially tall red mountain peak, the clan leader who appeared from there, was a lean male whose limbs and face were covered by skin which looked like black metal and had two split tails.

His eyes which stared at the strong wind between the mountains emitted a sharp gaze as cold as his metal skin.

His gaze was directed towards a faraway place which was further then the prominent slope.

At this instant, he felt that he had seen scenes which he should not be able to see and heard sounds which he should not be able to hear.

“Sigh, forget it.”

He showed a smile devoid of any warmth, nodded, and said.

“No matter how much the Demon World changes, the last one standing would always be me.”

The man had overwhelming demonic magic and might, and intelligence which normal demons did not have, this demon who led the biggest noble clan in the north of the Demon World----the clan leader of the Iron Scorpions, was called Alsiel.

The signs of changes in the Demon World slowly approached him and his people, causing him to feel more excited.

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Twenty years was definitely not considered long for demons.

The one year considered on Earth, and the cycle of time known by the demons in the Demon World were extremely different, this was because there were not many demons who knew how to calculate or record days, the only things that were meaningful to them were at most, today, yesterday and tomorrow.

Other than that, it would just be a long time ago, or after tomorrow.

The reason why there was no far in the future, was because thinking of this was meaningless.

When an enemy stronger than you appeared in front of you, it would be your death day.

If the situation allowed for it, demons definitely did not want to die, therefore the demons from similar clans would gather together and think of ways to defend against external attackers, however whether it would produce any results would only be known after encountering enemies.

The enemies were also working very hard.

To their enemies, they are also enemies. Both parties were going through great lengths and fighting desperately in order to not be killed.

In order to further ensure their own safety, the side who won in the end would have to kill all the enemies in front of them.

If they did not do that, these enemies who were still alive would all come over and kill them.

In the long years where no one was keeping count. In the Demon World where such things happen continuously until it felt that keeping count was meaningless.

There were only those lucky enough to win all their enemies and survived and were now treated as noble clans, the demons whose names were spread far and wide.

Or those known as vagrant demons, and could only constantly lead wandering lives with their small number of brethren who were lucky enough to survive.

However, in a large piece of land ruled by sand, giant boulders and mountains designated as the 'north area' of the whole Demon World, a new 'clan' which would overthrow all common sense in the Demon World will be born.

“Hmph!”

“Hurghh!”

“Hey, over here!”

The one who was currently surrounded by three Ashen Horn warriors was Satan, who was only holding a flimsy wooden stick.

On the contrary, the Ashen Horn warriors were all holding spears made from metal, with the addition of the difference in size, anyone who saw this would feel that it was a lynching.

However, with just one wooden stick, Satan easily deflected the tips of the spears which the Ashen Horns stabbed outwards in difficult to predict patterns and in unison.

“Oh, yosh!”

“Eargh!”

Just as one of their spears sunk into Satan’s wooden stick, the body of the holder of the spear let out a faint glow, and fell over after a strange cry.

“Ohh? Using a wooden rod to execute an electric shock? How was that done?”

“He probably took the chance when the other party was focused on the wooden stick to cause the surroundings to be filled with a demonic magic induced electric shock without touching the wooden stick.”

Even though one of their comrades had fallen, the remaining two were leisurely conducting an analysis.

Therefore, an angry roar which saw through this was heard from outside the fighting area.

“All of you lost today again! With this the three demon group will be demoted to a four demon group!”

“Y, yes! Clan leader!”

“Damn it! How would we be able to win against an opponent personally trained by the clan leader!”

Even if they were tearing up because of the harsh scolding, the two Ashen Horns still faced Satan once again.

“Heh.....oh!”

“Pugh!”

Without overlooking the opening between of them feeling slightly shaken, the front end of Satan’s wooden stick hit the temple of one of them, even though it did not look like much force was used, the impact still passed through the dense muscle and reached his internal organs.

The last Ashen Horn tried to attack Satan from the back.

“Ah!”

“Alright, I won!”

Without even looking, Satan accurately pointed the magic ice blade at the Ashen Horn’s neck, causing the other party to be unable to move because of this wave of killing aura.

“Sigh.....why did they lose so badly.”

The half surprised, half admiring voice was heard from afar, and the tension of the battlefield dissipated instantaneously.

“All of you.....are really useless. Can you consider yourself Ashen Horn warriors like this!”

Sitting cross legged from distance away from Satan and the three warriors, Adramelech, who was watching this duel, got up slowly.

“Clan, Clan leader, even though you said this, this guy really is very strong!”

The warrior whose movements were sealed by the magic ice blade, sat on the ground as he broke out into cold sweat.

“In the past.....even though we could still win.....recently.....we were completely.....”

“.....Ughm.”

The warrior who was hit in the temple who fell on the ground in a spread-eagled fashion let out a groan, the warrior felled by the electric shock had not regained consciousness.

“Because I also hate losing all the time!”

On the other hand, Satan dissolved the ice blade and lightly stood the wooden stick on the ground, however the sound and weight which was heard obviously did not belong to the material of wood.

“T, that sound.....”

“Ah, this?”

Satan proudly showed the stick to the demon who fell on the ground.

“This is a magic ice rod disguised as a wooden stick. If the weapon looks weak, the opponent will become careless right?”

“Ugh.....”

“Seriously.”

The young warrior, dealt a hurtful blow, gritted his teeth angrily, as for Adramelech, he felt flummoxed that his subordinates had totally fell for Satan’s strategem.

“If all of you do not buck up, us Ashen Horn clan will really fall into this brat’s hands. Pull yourself together!”

“Damn it! Next time, we will definitely not lose next time!”

“Y, yes.....”

“.....Ughm.”

After the three young warriors left, Satan exhaled deeply.

“Don’t be too harsh of them. They are already working very hard.”

“Before, I did not know that my own clan members were actually such good-for-nothings.”

Satan spoke up to defend the trio who had lost, but Adramelech shook his head with an expression of bitterness,

“If you weren’t here, perhaps the Ashen Horns would have perished ten years ago. If we went on like this, the nightmare that day would have occurred again. I no longer wish to see the veteran warriors being unable to reliably fight with the Ashen Horns and could only be killed one-sidedly.”

“Yeah, that’s true.”

The three who were acting as Satan's opponents were considered the younger warriors in the Ashen Horn clan.

The ten years ago Adramelech mentioned, was also ten years after Satan and Adramelech formed an alliance.

The Ashen Horns had faced a crisis which brought them to the brink of extinction.

“Those guys were really strong.....”

Satan recalled the events of ten years ago.

The first direct confrontation between the Ashen Horns and Iron Scorpions could not even be considered a battle.

The warriors of the Ashen Horns were being one-sidedly massacred by the Iron Scorpions.

If that battle was like the wars in the Demon World in the past, a final battle of resistance between the two clans where all battle forces were used, then perhaps only Adramelech would be the only Ashen Horn left, and the clan will perish just like that.

There were many reasons for defeat.

The Ashen Horn clan at that time still could not understand the concept of 'alliance' brought by Satan and the Pahalo Denino.

Even if there were demons who understood, they were still against treating an unknown young demon as an equal to the noble clan leader Adramelech and the Demon Bird General.

The opposition separated from 'the clan leader who became spineless because of outsiders' Adramelech, and led most of the warriors without authorization to fight with the Iron Scorpions.

But the main reason was still because of the strength of the Iron Scorpions as an 'army'.

The individual abilities of the Iron Scorpions warriors did not excel that much.

Even though they were well known in the Demon World for having the strongest skin and extremely high defense, they did not know how to use any special magic.

And the Iron Scorpions knew that better than anyone.

The battle style of the Iron Scorpions were actions carried out in an extremely organized manner through a chain of command.

Warriors were not allowed to look and fight enemies on their own, opponents

were indicated by the commanding officer at the place and scene of battle, then behind that commanding officer, there was a more senior commanding officer giving out instructions based on the overall situation.

The battles of the Iron Scorpions were that kind of battle.

When Adramelech discovered his subordinates have broken away from his control, and went to their aid together with Satan and Camio and the young warriors they led, everything was already too late.

The Ashen Horns who advocated fighting the enemy bravely and only thought about killing off the enemy in front of them were annihilated by the organized 'battle operations' of the Iron Scorpions.

Just like an elephant being tangled and pulled down by small carnivorous animals, forget about one demon defeating five demons, there were constantly scenes of warriors being surrounded by thirty demons and were not even able to defeat one.

The thing Satan had once suggested to Adramelech out of worry had actually happened, and what caused the Ashen Horn clan to shudder was that the Iron Scorpions were using telekinesis magic to execute 'bombardment attacks'.

Not only were the Iron Scorpions using the countless rocks as cannonballs, the bombardments did not stop at all.

Every demon would definitely have a limit to their magic, and if they were not mutants, they would not be able to constantly use magic orbs to attack,

but the rock cannonballs of the Iron Scorpion clan did not face such issues at all.

Because the Iron Scorpions immediately switched to a retreating battle tactic when the reinforcements appeared, Satan was unable to analyse their battle methods in detail, but they had at least constantly executed wide area rock cannon attacks for around twenty minutes.

As such, many warriors died from being fatally hit by what was called the Physic Cannon Attack, when they fought the Iron Scorpions in the future, they would need to find a countermeasure for this rock cannon attack.

Anyway, after the battle with the Iron Scorpions which was no trivial matter in various ways, not only did the Ashen Horn clan lose large numbers of their fighting force, they were forced to retreat without being able to fight back at all.

But before completely annihilating the enemy, the Iron Scorpions would definitely not back off.

Even though the Iron Scorpions advanced all the way to the Ashen Horn's base area, the stone city, Satan had fortunately thought of a plan from observing the situation of the battlefield, so the surviving Ashen Horns were able to successfully escape the fierce attacks of the Iron Scorpions.

“Sigh, even though we were also forced to escape to this remote land.”

“It's not considered that bad, for the stone city, we'll just have to snatch it

back. Even though this is the first time I have left the ancestral land, after living together with you, I started to feel that this is good too.”

In order to escape from the pursuit for the Iron Scorpions, they gave up on the base of the Ashen Horns where Satan and Adramelech met, which was the stone city on the west side of the wastelands.

The strategy Satan thought of was to specially open up the entrance of the stone city, causing the enemies to be wary of the ambushes within, then taking the chance to escape from other passageways, in ‘the world on the other side of the sky’, this seemed to be known as the empty city strategy.

Even though this was a crushing defeat, as the empty city strategy was successful, they knew that there were demons within the Iron Scorpions ‘who were so smart that they would fall of this kind of trick’.

There was a ‘commander’ or ‘leader’ within the Iron Scorpions who had a completely different nature from Adramelech and Camio, and had used organized group battle tactics.

And that demon was an essential puzzle piece if Satan wanted to complete the future ambitions which he had planned for himself.

“The other party might not be careless next time you know?”

“I know. After all the other party also knows that our side has someone like you would can use ‘strategies’.”

Adramelech replied, causing Satan to nod in admiration.

“Oh, you’re very clear about this.”

“As long as I live with you, I will know even I don’t want to. I’m still the leader of the Ashen Horns after all.”

Adramelech said in disdain.

“And I have a huge score to settle with that damn Iron Scorpion leader Alsiel. We have to win against him next time, I’m depending on you a lot okay.”

After saying this, Adramelech patted the shoulder of Satan who had already grew much bigger compared to 20 years ago, then turned around and left.

The Ashen Horn clan who barely escaped the fierce attack of the Iron Scorpions were currently staying in a natural cavern within a mountain near a lake in the wastelands where Lucifer had caused a lot of trouble in the past.

The key element of Adramelech’s magic is water, not only did this place have an abundant source of water, the cave and mountain was able to act as a natural fortress, but they could not hide there forever.

Without Adramelech’s reminder, having grown up a lot compared to twenty years ago, Satan did not plan to lose to the Iron Scorpions next time.

Satan, who had been around the same height as Lucifer, in these twenty years, he had grown to two times of Lucifer's height.

Even if it did not match the Ashen Horns who were naturally burly, for Satan, born as a member of the Black Goat clan, he had what was considered a rather huge stature.

Even though the youthful demon Satan was young, he was already an outstanding warrior with the aura of a general.

“Hey~Satan.”

And then, Lucifer came here like he was replacing Adramelech.

“Oh, Lucifer.”

“.....Did you grow taller again?”

“Who knows? I'm not that clear myself.”

“How infuriating. Even though you were around my height a while ago.”

“The while ago you speak of is from twenty years ago right.”

“To me, twenty years ago is no different from two days ago. Even though you seem to have forgotten, I am much older than you.”

Lucifer unhappily looked towards Satan whose line of sight was already much higher than his.

“Forget about that, I already took action according to your instructions, is it really alright? Do Adramelech and Camio know about this?”

“Do you think they will know about it? Even if we did discuss this with them, we will definitely be stopped in the end.”

“.....I say, the one who will be scolded would be me, the one who helped you.”

“I’m sorry for always troubling you so much. I will explain to them properly later.”

“Even if you explain to them later on, it would still be like what normally happens in the end, both of us will be scolded together! Seriously! That stinky old man, if not for the sake of the flying dragons, I really want to send him the Hell earlier! With his age, it won’t be strange no matter when he dies!”

“.....Sigh, that’s true.”

Satan responded to Lucifer’s protests in a vague manner.

The flying dragons Lucifer was talking about, referred to the mount system Camio started preparing twenty years ago.

Known as flying dragons, the huge lizard demonic beasts which could fly, not only were able to transport large numbers of the burly Ashen Horns in one go, they could execute attacks from the air to hit the ground, in order to obtain this kind of maneuvering force, Camio started to train this kind of creature.

Even though it was not as if Satan did not have ideas regarding the raising of these demonic beasts, actually specially selecting the fierce flying dragons and successfully taming them, it was a feat expected from the Pahalo Denino, who were familiar with the sky.

Right now, Camio was passing down the ways to raise the flying dragons to the Ashen Horns, and was in charge of selecting the warriors who were able to control the flying dragons to fly in the sky.

In order to avoid the enemies using telekinesis magic to continuously launch rock cannonballs, which happened in the battle 10 years ago, the power of this flying dragon was considered a rather important factor.

Because he understood this, even if he was scolded by Camio who was weaker than him, Lucifer had to suppress his urge to retaliate with violence.

“Sigh, what we’re doing next is laying out the foundation of solve these problems. Just bear with Camio’s scoldings for a while.”

“What, do you mean that when you solved the thing you’re planning for right now, then Camio can be killed?”

“No, idiot.”

Camio's power was considered as relatively weaker.

Age was obviously a huge factor, but the main reason was that in the name of training Satan, not just the many Ashen Horn and Pahalo Denino warriors, even Adramelech and Lucifer's power had increased.

Different clans training each other's techniques without killing each other, thanks to this situation which had never appeared in the history of the Demon World, ten years after they lost to the Iron Scorpions, Satan, Camio, Lucifer and Adramelech, the power of the demons led by them grew by leaps and bounds, and they assimilated more vagrant demons and small clans.

Of course, Satan who grew the most, his power could not be compared with twenty years ago, right now he had grown to the level of if it was one-on-one, he was even able to fight with Adramelech and Lucifer and be evenly matched with them.

In other words, this also meant that his strength had unwittingly surpassed Camio's.

Even though Camio was still a notch above in sword skills, it might not be so for long.

However, the burden Camio had right now was huge.

The Demon Bird General who even the veterans acknowledged was currently using the rich knowledge and magic accumulated over the years to ‘educate’ most of the demons, and for this task, it was all done by Camio alone.

Once a battle occurs, Camio might have to enter the battle personally to command the Pahalo Denino clan and the warriors riding the flying dragons.

As long as Lucifer was not given strict orders, he would only act when he was interested and Adramelech’s understanding of things was not as deep as Camio.

Perhaps the image of being a youthful demon was too strong, Satan, who was even acknowledged by many strong demons, was still looked down upon to some degree by most of the other demons.

Anyway, the Adramelech Alliance Army with the Ashen Horns as their core, the reason why this group created by Satan and made up of many demons could be set up, was largely because of Camio’s support from behind.

“Looks like something needs to be done.”

Even though Camio’s power would be more and more important in the future, if one demon monopolized too many important tasks, if something happened to that demon, an unthinkable chaos might occur.

“The starting line hasn’t been stood on yet, I need to think of a way for that old man to live a little longer.”

At this moment, as if the timing had been calculated well, the topic's focus, Camio, also came here.

“Oh, Satan, such a coincidence. Just now, the flying dragon I mentioned before have completed its adjustments. I was planning to ask you to try riding it.”

“Ohh! That's really a coincidence.”

“What?”

“Hurry and let me try riding it!”

“H, hm? Forget it. Even though it's just a prototype, the ‘seat’, ‘rein’ and ‘stirrup’ you mentioned have been installed.”

“Great great!”

Satan rushed Camio to go over to below the flying dragon as if he had been waiting for it for a long time.

Even though Lucifer had a bad feeling about that figure for some reason, since he had nothing to do, he still followed the both of them subconsciously.

“Ohh, it feels like its colour has improved.”

The black scales of the flying dragon waiting there, had red sunlight reflecting off them, countless sharp horns grew out from the ferocious looking head, and the eyes below were currently staring towards Satan.

“Because its skin peeled off once before. Following your instructions, I tried to change the food which we were feeding it.”

The demonic beast called the flying dragon was a large lizard with huge wings, in the north side of the Demon World where Satan and the others were based, it was a demonic beast which was distributed very widely in the area.

The flying dragons had a tendency to hunt other demonic beasts and demonic bugs, in terms of biology, it was not as dependant on the demonic magic in the atmosphere as the demons. Of course, the flying dragons were able to continue living even if they did not eat, but it was currently confirmed that as long as they were given food, their rate of growth will increase, so Camio was currently researching on how to adjust their food.

“You still remember how to ride it?”

Camio handed the reins of the flying dragon whose scales have become more beautiful to Satan.

“Of course! Yosh!”

Satan jumped on the back of the flying dragon and started to use the new seat and stirrup.

After going out from the cave halfway up the mountain, there was a wide flat ground, and in terms of structure, it was suitable for the huge flying dragons to take off and land, and this place would probably be treated as the takeoff point for the flying dragons.

“Heh! Fly!”

Under Satan’s orders, the flying dragon roared, and flapped its wings to fly up to the red sky.

“Oh! It’s feels faster than before! This is good!”

Including Satan, among the strong demons, some of them naturally had abilities to fly on their own.

But as flying over long distances will use up huge amount of demonic magic and physical stamina, so to the demons who can use flying magic, flying dragons on the battlefield are still considered important transport tools.

“Sigh, I don’t need one though.”

“What is it, Lucifer. As long as you tell me, I can help you raise a small flying dragon.”

“There’s no need. If I don’t fly with my own power, it feels disgusting.”

“Hm, it’s not like I don’t understand this.....hey! Satan! It’s about time for you to be done right! I still need to adjust the equipment, come down first!”

Camio shouted at the flying dragon dancing in the sky, but Satan did not look like he planned to land for some reason.

“.....Wait, don’t tell me that guy.....”

Seeing this, Luifer suddenly had a bad feeling.

And that bad feeling came true five seconds later.

“Hey.....hey, Satan, where are you going?”

After Satan let the flying dragon roar, he flew directly towards the sky in the east southeast direction.

Leaving behind the dumfolded Camio, and Lucifer who pressed his hand against his head like he could not take it anymore.

“.....Hey, Lucifer.”

“.....What is it?”

“Just now you said ‘Don’t tell me that guy.....’, this means that you know what Satan is planning to do right.”

“Already so old and yet his hearing is still so good.....seriously.”

Lucifer scratched his head, feeling troubled, and pointed at the direction Satan flew towards.

“That guy is going to see Alsiel next.”

“.....What?”

At this instant, from Camio’s expression, Lucifer saw the shadow of the Demon Bird General in the past.

“Uh, I wasn’t around for the whole day yesterday, right? That guy asked me to go to the territory of the Iron Scorpions to tell them that our leader will visit them in the coming days.....”

“What!”

Camio’s bird mouth produced an exaggerated scream and Lucifer was mentally prepared to be lectured.

However, the angry shouts could not be heard no matter how long he waited, and when Lucifer came to his senses, Camio was preparing to enter the cave.

“H, hey, Camio?”

“We should see Lord Adramelech, and gather everyone, including the vagrant demons, Lucifer.”

“Huh? Why are you saying this so suddenly?”

Lucifer, unable to understand the meaning behind Camio’s words, caught up to beside him, and noticed that Camio’s eyes held the light of determination.

“The Satan of ten years ago was still very weak. And being unable to stop the Ashen Horn clan from losing control, his ambitions only started to move ten years later than planned.”

“O, oh, that. That did happen before.”

“That guy is already standing on the starting line. I have to match him and make preparations. We can’t waste anymore time. I am already an old demon after all.”

“Is that so. I thought you were going to scold us for acting on our own again.”

“I am also constantly worrying about what I should do. I truly want to witness Satan’s dreams coming true. For this purpose, perhaps.....”

“Perhaps what?”

Camio skillfully showed a smile with his beak and said,

“To Satan, Alsiel is also a necessary man.”

“What are you planning!”

“It’s not about what plans I have or not! Didn’t I say before that I will be coming?”

Faced with the angry shout on the ground, Satan also responded with a shout from the flying dragon.

“Are you Alsiel? You don’t look that much different from the others!”

The base of the Iron Scorpions, a city made from mountains were currently filled with killing aura.

Even though the vagrant demon of the wastelands, Lucifer, had come not long ago, this time it was a mysterious demon invading from such a nearby place.

And the enemy was even using a never seen before tool, the strange action of appearing by riding a flying dragon.

Among the Iron Scorpions, Alsiel was also considered a one of a kind demon who lived a long life, but he had never seen demons who would do this.

“Are you the demon the vagrant demon of the wastelands mentioned?”

“That’s right! Because I left it to Lucifer to handle the greeting method, so if there was anything rude about it, I hope you can be understanding!”

From the killing aura overflowing from the mountains, Lucifer should have done something rather bad here.

Satan knew that Lucifer, who was equal in power to Adramelech and Alsiel was able to take on the task of messenger.

But from this, when he restrained himself and lived honestly while obediently letting himself get scolding by Camio, he seemed to have accumulated a lot of stress.

Upon careful examination, there was one place in the nearby mountain peaks which had an unnatural depression.

“It looks like he seems to have caused a huge ruckus.”

Satan gave a wry smile and turned towards Alsiel again.

Then he announced nonchalantly.

This was the ambition the young demon from the Black Goat clan had since he was young young which he had never told anyone about, including Adramelech, Lucifer and Camio.

“Let me introduce myself again, Leader of the Iron Scorpions Alsiel!”

His name, shook the air.

“My name is Satan! The one who will conquer the entire Demon World sooner or later!”

This sentence caused a wave of commotion among the Iron Scorpions while they were wary of the sky above.

And what happened after the commotion was a roar of laughter.

Demons did not have the concept of conquering the entire Demon World.

Because such a thing was impossible.

Whether it was the Ashen Horns and their leader Adramelech, the Iron Scorpions and their leader Alsiel, the strongest vagrant demon Lucifer or the Demon Bird General Camio, who were well known in the area, they could not be termed as existences known and heard of throughout the entire Demon World.

No matter how big the clan, there was a limit in population increase, and without considering how the numbers will increase, it was impossible for only one kind of demon to be left in the Demon World.

That's right, in the Demon World where annihilating the enemy is the only

way of survival, conquering the entire Demon World was equivalent to completely annihilating other clans, and in reality, this kind of thing could not be done at all.

So the Iron Scorpions laughed. Laughing at this strange demon who appeared from the sky riding a beast.

But this wave of commotion and laughter suddenly quietened down instantly after reaching a certain place.

Only one man was not laughing.

Clan leader Alsiel, only he widened his eyes like he was shocked by Satan's words and he stared at Satan in the sky.

After seeing their leader's behavior, the Iron Scorpions closed their mouths one by one.

Their leader did not reprimand the ones who laughed. But even if everyone was laughing at the delusions of that demon in the sky, he was the only one not laughing.

What was the leader thinking?

“Conquer, the entire Demon World.....”

Alsiel repeated Satan's words.

Because Satan understood that only Alsiel was thinking about the true meaning behind Satan's words, he chose to wait.

Then, Alsiel seemed to have discovered something.

“I see.....you're the successor of the Demon Bird General. Are you the one controlling the Ashen Horns from behind?”

“You know about me? It's an honour. I shouldn't have done anything which would have reached the ears of Lord Alsiel from a large noble clan.”

Satan had rarely showed himself these twenty years.

Even from the battle even years ago, Adramelech and the veterans of the Ashen Horns were fighting, logically nothing which would cause Alsiel to hear of the name Satan should have occurred.

But, Alsiel knew. No, more like he deduced it.

“The Ashen Horns are not so smart to carry out that kind of retreating strategy. And the vagrant demon who logically should not be interacting with anyone, also brought your name over yesterday. With this, is there a need for other reasons?”

Satan smiled in satisfaction.

It should be like this.

The leader of the Iron Scorpions was not a normal demon after all.

Alsiel had a considerable amount of ability comparable to Adramelech and Lucifer, commanding ability which far exceeded Camio and had a level of thinking which could keep up with Satan, whose knowledge far exceeded normal demons.

I cannot allow this man to be killed by the Ashen Horns.

In order to fulfill Satan's ambition, he definitely needed this man.

But the current situation with Alsiel was different from when Satan invited Camio, Lucifer and Adramelech to work together with him.

Alsiel and the Iron Scorpions were the largest noble clan in the northern area of the Demon World. After winning the Ashen Horn clan once, they currently did not have any pressing crisis and do not require anyone's help, and furthermore, did not feel dissatisfied with the current situation.

Satan had to resist so that he would not say anything about recruiting Alsiel.

No matter what he said directly to Alsiel now, it would only cause his attitude to become unyielding. Of course it will also only anger the surrounding Iron Scorpions.

But, when was the last time he had this kind of thoughts?

It was probably the first time he met Camio. Clearly seeing the light which would lead to the future path.

“Just like you thought, I am the demon behind them. I am from the Black Goat clan.”

“Black Goat clan.....I have no impression of them. They are not worth remembering.”

Alsiel had only heard the name of this clan, because they were a weak clan whose numbers were about the same as those of vagrant demons, he only remembered that the clan had perished very early on.

“Haha, it can’t be helped. We are a very weak clan after all. Just Lord Alsiel of a noble clan being able to remember that the clan was not worth remembering is considered rather good already.”

“.....Ugh.”

Even if his birth clan was ridiculed, Satan was not bothered and even leisurely answered in a sarcastic manner.

“But you will definitely lose to the demon whose birth clan was not even worth remembering. At that time, you will remember it clearly. Black Goat Clan, as well as the name Satan Jacob.”

At this instant, the whole mountain range was enveloped in killing aura.

Other than Alsiel, everyone else rose to the shallow provocation.

The other party had been displaying a high and mighty attitude, and was actually insulting the clan leader directly right now, it would be strange if they did not get angry.

Only Alsiel maintained his composure.

“This common name of Satan isn’t even worth remembering. But, I remember your face now.”

“Oh?”

“You will challenge us sooner or later to continue the battle ten years ago right? At that time, I will spare none of you such that all of you will not even have a chance to regret that you have insulted me and the Iron Scorpion clan.”

“If you say too much, you’ll regret it when you cannot achieve it later. Silence is golden.”

“Cease those strange words of yours.”

Alsiel mumbled then raised his arm in front of him.

“As long as I wave this hand downwards, the warriors here will launch

attacks at you simultaneously. Scram before that happens. Foolish demon. The next time we meet will be on the battlefield.”

“Thanks. Then let’s do that.”

Satan judged that it was time to retreat.

Since he already understood Alsiel’s behavior, Satan just made the flying dragon turn back.

“Excuse me, goodbye.”

Then he lightly waved to Alsiel and flew towards the sky in the northwest direction.

Even though some Iron Scorpions ignored Alsiel’s restrain and sporadically launched attacks at Satan, whether it was rock cannonballs using telekinesis magic, or demonic magic orb attacks, they could not catch up to the speed or height or the flying dragon.

When Alsiel saw this----

“.....Looks like an opponent who needs to be handled rather cautiously.”

After saying this, Alsiel pursed his lips and turned to return to his throne.

“Looks like it can’t be handled using normal methods. Making an empty show of strength like the time with Adramelech will definitely not work!”

Satan, riding the flying dragon and speeding through the sky, was completely unable to suppress the smile on his face.

“But, Alsiel.....and the Iron Scorpions, be prepared! I will definitely make all of you my subordinates! Then.....”

In the sky, Satan turned his gaze slightly towards the south.

“Everyone will head to the south. At that time.....”

The next sentence did not even reach the ears of the flying dragon Satan was riding on.

Only the wind, sky, Satan himself, and the small purple jewel which Satan wore at his chest and never took off could hear this.

“I will become the ‘Demon King’.”

※

“It’s like this, I declared war on Alsiel.”

“Idiot!”

“Are you an idiot?”

“I should still say it anyway. You idiotic brat!”

When Satan returned, he was seen as an idiot in different way by three demons.

“You mentioned before that ‘Declare war’ are words which declare that a war has begun right! Why did you do such a thing!”

The one who was the most surprised was Adramelech.

“As long as we launch an ambush, we can create many situations where we would have an upper hand, why are you specially increasing the guard of the other party!”

Of course, Satan knew that this kind of opinion will appear.

“Sigh! I would normally think that way too.”

“Even though you probably have your reasons, you should still change that habit where you just do something without telling any of us.”

“But even if I say it, all of you would definitely object.”

“Of course.”

Camio bluntly rebuked Satan who was acting difficult.

“But giving those other than yourself a chance to ‘object’ is an important thing. It’s still fine if it’s us, but you might have to personally command demons besides us in the future. In that situation, who knows who would object, and the reality that ‘a discussion was conducted’ needs to be created, even if there was ‘a successful outcome’ afterwards like you said, dissatisfaction will still accumulate. That would be what you call ‘bad victory’. Who can guarantee that the parties whom you would command in the future will be as forgiving to you as us.”

“That.....sorry.”

Camio’s clear rebuke caused Satan show a rare moment of speechlessness.

“When the group grows, the troublesome things will increase. This is what you said before. Aren’t you aware of this yourself?”

“Yes, sorry.”

This time, Camio was undeniably correct, he had acted wrongly. So Satan honestly lowered his head and reflected.

“Then, can I ask you to explain why you did this stupid thing? Including your true intentions.”

“My true intentions?”

“Yeah.”

Camio looked at Adramelech and Lucifer who were emitting dangerous atmospheres.

“Lucifer, Lord Adramelech and I, originally would not be able to peacefully gather together at all. But since you already did such a thing, then obviously.....”

“Eh?”

“Could it be?”

When Camio said this, the remaining two demons seemed to realise it.

“You are also definitely planning to recruit Alsiel here right. Rather than declaring war, it’s more like you went to meet with him right. You idiotic brat.”

“Ah!”

“How is that possible.....”

If based on old knowledge, Lucifer’s and Adramelech’s reactions can be said to be correct.

But these two have personally experienced what Camio talked about.

So they were unable to directly decide that Satan's thoughts were stupid.

After all, they were already aware that what they were doing did not match the common sense of normal demons at all.

“Sigh~it is like that, yeah.”

Satan honestly confirmed Camio's words, but Camio's questioning had not ended.

“It's about time you told this old man. Gathering these demons, what do you want to do?”

“What do I want to do huh.....”

“Yeah, I'm very bothered by this as well.”

Adramelech added on in agreement.

“Satan, when you fought with me, you asked what I thought about the future. What you are doing now, even though you are using methods which did not match the common sense of the Demon World, but it looks like you are increasing the comrades from different clans. However doing just that, in the long term it does not appear any different from what I was doing before. You, who even wants to pull in Alsiel and the Iron Scorpions, what is your true purpose?”

“.....That’s right. Because I recently have been doing similar things, I’m starting to feel a little tired of this ‘game’.”

This sentence of Lucifer was very important.

The relationship between Satan and Camio, Lucifer and Adramelech, even though Satan was the focus point, they did not have any obvious hierarchical relationship between them.

To forcefully mention one, only Camio acknowledged himself as Satan’s guardian.

Even if Satan used his knowledge to lead the people around him, to others, not knowing what Satan was thinking was actually an uncomfortable thing. To put it in a nice way, they were being led, but it can be said that they were being controlled as well.

“.....All of you can’t laugh okay.”

Satan should also be thinking this, so he planned to be honest about his true purpose.

“And, I want to confirm something before I say it. The current us, what kind of group are we?”

““““Hm?””””

Satan's question caused the trio to look at one another.

“Camio's is right, I do want to have Alsiel join us. As well as the Iron Scorpions whom he's leading. And I actually have plans for victory. Then assuming that that guy joins us, what group will we be at that time?”

“What group?”

Assuming that the Iron Scorpions joined as well, then the Iron Scorpion, Ashen Horn and the Pahalo Denino clans, the population of these three clans should make up most of the numbers, and adding on vagrant demons like Lucifer and the numbers of the small clans they assimilated in these twenty years, it would gradually exceed the number of Ashen Horn non-combatants.

“Let me make it simpler. Assuming the Iron Scorpions launch a huge attack right now, we also band together to resist the enemy together, at that time, which clan are we considered as?”

“Even though.....I really want to say Ashen Horn clan.....”

The Ashen Horns did make up the core of the warrior group of this group, but in the battle of ten years ago, Adramelech already knew very well that individual strength does not simply equate to strength on the battlefield.

The vagrant demons and the ones from the small clans, from their language to their appearance, height and abilities, they were all inconsistent, and it was really difficult to find common points.

In fact, even the four of them discussing here were very different in terms of appearance, abilities and other areas.

Only Satan obtained a level of ability equal to the trio after training under them, but no matter what, they still could not use the Ashen Horn clan where Adramelech is the leader, or the Pahalo Denino clan where Camio is the leader, this kind of shallow concept to group them together.

“I know one term which can describe this group. Once I say this term, I think all of you will know I want to make Alsiel join us using such a reckless method. But.....”

Satan suddenly became very ambiguous, and looked at the three of them in an unsure manner.

“The instant I say this term, all of you might become my enemy. Which is why I have kept it a secret from all of you until now. I am a weak demon after all.”

Even if within the perished Black Goat Clan, Satan could be considered the strongest in history, that was still because he met Camio, Lucifer and Adramelech, and accepted their help and training, that was how he made it to today.

Satan was very clear about this.

The moment he said this term, the relationship between him and them will

shift in a definitive manner. So if the situation allowed, he hoped to explain after Alsiel joined, but it seemed like not everything could go according to plan.

After Satan spoke----

“Hm.”

“Hmph.”

“.....Sigh.”

Adramelech, Lucifer and Camio looked at each other again after a short pause.

“Then.....”

“It would be that right.”

“.....There’s only that.”

“W, what.”

The trio looked at Satan in turn like they felt a little disappointment, then said simultaneously,

““““Demon King Army’””””

“.....Hey!”

The term the trio said directly caused Satan to become flustered.

Because that was what Satan hid deep within in heart, and can be said to be a highly secretive term.

“What, actually treating this kind of thing so importantly, and you were even worried that we would betray you and leave.”

“It’s good to be young.”

“Sigh, it can’t be helped. This guy deviates from common sense in various ways after all.”

Even so, the three demons were teasing this term hidden in Satan’s heart like they were chatting idly.

“A, all of you.....”

“All of us have lived for a period of time which is many times longer than you have, do you think we would not know this term?”

“And that guy who is treated as a legendary existence in the Demon World has the same name as you.”

“‘Great Demon King Satan’. The name of the mighty ruler who unified all the demons in the Demon World on his own.”

Satan was so surprised that he became speechless.

Ancient Demon King Satan.

That name was a name he heard from ‘that woman’ long before he met Camio.

But it was said that in the current Demon World, there were no longer any demons who spread around this Demon King’s name and legacy.

However it looks like it was only because these ‘spreaders’ simply did not let other people know, there were still these old seniors who clearly inherited these memories.

Even though Satan was not self aware, it was him who gathered these demons to his side.

“Yeah, I see, I know this brat’s purpose now. Then perhaps I also know what he is afraid of.”

“He really thinks of some abnormal things.”

“But, I also wish to witness that.”

“Satan.”

The trio abandoned the important Satan and started chatting on their own, but Adramelech suddenly turned towards Satan and said,

“Isn’t that good? You becoming ‘King’.”

“Eh?”

“That’s right, I also feel that this is good.”

Adramelech and Lucifer elected Satan to be the ‘king’ of their group, on the contrary, it was Satan who said frantically,

“B, but.....are all of you, alright with it?”

Talking about ability, there was no obvious difference between Satan, Lucifer and Adramelech.

If the power of the Pahalo Denino clan were combined together, Camio will definitely not lose to them as well.

“This is nothing different from how it is so far. We only gave a clear name to your place in the group.”

But Adramelech said this nonchalantly.

“You command us, we act. But as long as we feel dissatisfied, or feel that the stakes are inconsistent, we will leave you. We have agreed on this in the beginning right. Whether you call yourself ‘king’ or not, there’s not much difference.”

“Those vagrant demons still want a clear ‘leader’ after all. But because they vary so much in terms of appearance and power, wouldn’t having a ‘king’ make things easy to understand?”

Lucifer also spoke in a relaxed way like usual.

‘The ‘king’ Lord Ardrameleh just mentioned, is not a magic spell which would make the one known as the ruler become good at everything. The term ‘king’ is used to describe a ‘mechanism’ which should be used within a group. Satan, can you become a ‘king’ which can surpass this level of ‘mechanism’.....”

Lastly, the aged Demon Bird General, from a position a full head taller than the one who will become ‘king’, said this in a dominant manner.

Just like what he did when he just met that young demon in the past.

“From now on, you have to depend on your own personal performance.”

※

When they knew that the huge troop of Iron Scorpions were approaching the mountain land next to the lake where Satan and the others were based, it was already ten days after they had that conversation.

Considering the distance between the mountain where the Iron Scorpions based themselves and here, Alsiel should have deployed his troops on the day Satan went there to declare war.

According to the scouting reports, the total number of the Iron Scorpions was fifty thousand. The numbers of this huge army greatly exceeded the estimated total number of Iron Scorpions in the battle ten years ago.

“Actually deploying fifty thousand of them directly, this means that there should still be a few thousand as the backup army. That would be the guys occupying the Ashen Horn stone city.”

“Mobilising the whole army huh. So easy to understand. Then, what do we do. Do we hold down the fort?”

Adramelech nodded at Satan’s analysis while asking a question, Satan shook his head and said,

“We will not win if we hold down the fort. The other party has more numbers. If we hide in the shell, not only can the other party attack however they want, the ways we can fight back will be limited as well.”

When Satan was holding a meeting, he would naturally use ‘words’, he

displayed the situation of the battlefield using demonic light on the large stone table, and constantly added on information.

“When Alsiel is attacking, he would form ‘formations’. This is a way of arrangement to effectively use the troops on the battlefield. For example, this one arranged into a square is called a ‘square formation’, the troops on the outside will hold spears or other mid-range weapons. The middle would be the distance attack troops. As long as close range attack troops are arranged between the two troops, then no matter which direction the enemy attacks from, this formation would be able to handle it. Compared to having the soldiers attack in a scattered manner, huge numbers of enemies can be handled this way, and it will reduce losses on our end as well.”

“I see. Even if we asked the Ashen Horns to handle this alone, they might be unable to defeat them with just brute force.”

“Then how about aerial attacks? As long as I and the Pahalo Denino attack from the top, wouldn’t it take down the enemies who can only fight close range battles?”

Lucifer used his hands to show a flying position, Satan continued to explain,

“Even if we attack from the air, it is only a little better than attack from the front on land. The square formation is the foundation of all the formations. As long as every alternate soldier in the outermost area or the inner area prepare a huge shield which can cover their whole body, even though their attacking power will decrease, it will be in exchange for the strongest defense, and they would be able to deliver their close range troops to the

front of the battlefield. Even if we attack from the sky, if there are guys in the inner area who can use magic, we will get counterattacked.”

This was an attacking method known as the ‘tortoise formation’ in the world on the other side of the sky. Even though movement speed and attacking power was sacrificed, it had strong defense power which the other formations could not match up to.

“The Iron Scorpions are a clan where the stature between each of them differs very little. So their physique is very suitable for forming this kind of formation. For a mixed army like us, we would not be able to do such a thing.”

It was true, even if they let Adramelech and Lucifer hold a shield to form a formation, it would only create a lot of openings.

The greatest weakness of the tortoise formation was obvious, it would not be able to handle attacks which can go through the shield, but in a battle between demons, not only can demonic magic be used for attacking, it was frequently used for defense, so it was difficult to effectively prepare attacks stronger than the enemies’ shields.

“And there’s still that continuous bombardment. The ability of the enemy’s mages are still unknown. We do not know if the Iron Scorpions’ telekinesis magic can only launch cannonballs which have been prepared beforehand, or can they pull down aerial enemies from the sky.”

“Uh, then what do we do?”

“Hm. Camio, how are the preparations for the things I asked you to prepare?”

“Because the request was sudden, it cannot be distributed to everyone. But half of them can use it.”

“Good good. With these we can execute the first wave of attack. Next to Lucifer. It’s fine if they’re not very strong, I want you to pick out a few quick footed ones from the vagrant demons.”

“Quick footed guys huh. Understood.”

“Next is Adramelech. In this battle, I want you to be at the vanguard.”

“Yeah. Just what I wanted. In order to settle the score ten years ago, I was going to say how can you not allow me to step into battle first.”

Even though Adramelech appeared to be very motivated, Satan immediately put a dampener on the situation.

“Sorry for interrupting you when you’re being hot headed, but the period of battle would not be long. As long as you attack the opponents according to my instructions, and cause a ruckus, you have to retreat quickly according to the instructions.”

“What?”

“Just like what I said before, we do not know what battle tactics Alsiel had

taught the Iron Scorpions. So I do not wish to battle at full power from the beginning, but do battle while analyzing the opponents' abilities. With this, unnecessary sacrifices on both sides can be minimized.”

“Hm.”

“Ah, there’s something I have to make clear to all of you first.”

Satan showed a cold expression and said,

“Remember to pass this message to everyone, if anyone is too eager to obtain credit, or is overly immersed in battle and disrupts the operation, they will either be abandoned directly or killed on the spot. Don’t forget, the purpose of this battle, is not to annihilate the Iron Scorpions.”

After that, in order to carry out Satan’s orders, everyone started to disperse to various places.

At the same time, Alsiel was also giving instructions to various places as their overall commander while watching the faraway mountain area next to the lake.

“Remember to pay attention to the movements of the enemy’s flying dragons. Do not assume that only the leader can ride the flying dragons. Magic team, do not let down your guard towards the sky!”

Just as the Iron Scorpion soldiers were busily running around, Alsiel closely watched the wastelands which would become a battlefield and said,

“Alright.....how would you act?”

The battle started very suddenly.

“Our troops are currently engaging with the vanguard troops, Ashen Horn clan leader Adramelech!”

“What?”

What was received at the same time as the start of the battle, was this shocking report.

Unexpectedly, one of the strong warriors among the enemy was the one who led the charge at the start.

“.....How about the movements of the vanguard troops?”

“The troops who made contact first were instantly defeated. Right now we are surrounding Adramelech’s troops from three directions.”

“How about the enemy soldiers other than Adramelech’s troops?”

“Even though we discovered flying troops with the Pahalo Denino clan as their core, we did not discover any signs of the flying dragons, and did not detect any movements from Lucifer or Camio.”

“Hm, I see.”

After nodding in response to these reports, Alsiel quickly arranged his thoughts and gave instructions.

“Adramelech’s troops are just bait. Don’t chase them too far in because of an eagerness to achieve. Engage them while keeping a fixed distance, but don’t allow the other party to penetrate too deeply, if the enemies look like they’re going to escape, and let them off.”

“Yes!”

The reporting soldier did not ask the reason for the instructions. But only ran like the wind to convey the clan leader’s instructions.

“That man will not send Adramelech out first for no reason. Treat it as a reward for fighting against overwhelming odds. I will allow all of you to move two steps first.”

As Alsiel confirmed the reports of the battle situation which came in continuously, he waited for the next move from the other party.

Lucifer and Camio, as well as that man called Satan, still did not appear.

According to the reports, other than Adramelech’s vigorous sudden attack, various battle also started sporadically in other areas, but Alsiel ignored these reports.

The next time Alsiel moved was when he received the report of an aerial attack.

“Aerial attack? Is it an attack executed from the air?”

“Yes, er, erhm.....”

The warrior passing the message said this in a troubled manner,

“We’re unable to confirm the figure of the approaching enemy!”

“Unable to confirm the figure of the approaching enemy? Could it be that the ones approaching or not the Pahalo Denino, Lucifer or that flying dragon?”

“Even though we think that it should be the flying dragons.....”

“Why are you speaking so vaguely!”

“B, because when the huge demon beast flying in the air appeared, it was as if it suddenly jumped out from the sky!”

Alsiel’s forceful voice caused the messenger soldier to continue flusteredly,

“When our side discovered it, it was already too late to put up any defenses, the enemies on the demonic beast launched an aerial attack of demonic magic

orbs, causing the right flank of the formation to be badly damaged. Currently, the actual damage sustained is still unknown.....”

The flying dragons approaching without being detected and suddenly appeared above the troops. How were they able to do this kind of thing?

There must be a trick to this. Even though there was concealment magic, the magician troops would not miss the demonic magic reaction when the demonic magic was activated.

But before Alsiel was able to sort out his thoughts, the report of Aldramelech’s troops retreating was received from the vanguard troops.

This report caused Alsiel to judge that the enemy’s true attack was not Adramelech, but the flying dragon’s aerial attack.

“.....Invisible flying dragons.....was giving them two steps too much?”

After the flying dragon troops returned, Camio was happy to see that the troops were unhurt.

Even though the flying dragons’ chest, legs, tail, neck and other areas which would be exposed to the ground when flying were fitted with leather protective armour to guard against attacks from the ground, Camio still painted a layer of colouring using the red soil on the protective armour and covered them with red cloth.

Like this, as long as they flew to a certain height, and blend between the red sky and gray clouds, they would not be easily discovered by the enemy.

Even though the term ‘camouflage’ did not exist in the Demon World, the first one who imported this concept into battle was Satan.

Not only the flying dragons, if they gave the Pahalo Denino warriors similar equipment next time, the success rate of their aerial attacks will also increase greatly.

As long as he saw the flying dragons once, Alsiel will deduce that Satan’s side was going to send the flying dragons into battle.

Then as long as they were one step ahead of this deduction, they would be able to cause huge damage to Alsiel and the Iron Scorpions.

Even if this plan was hugely successful, but on the contrary, it can be predicted that in order to investigate the situation of their army, Alsiel might consolidate the defense of his troops once again.

Thinking this, Camio felt that perhaps they should take the chance that it was still the beginning of the battle to be mentally prepared for some sacrifices and attack deeper.

“Hm? Hey.”

Camio stopped one nearby beast demon who was a flying dragon soldier.

“Where are Lucifer and the others who took off with you? Have they not returned?”

“No, Lord Lucifer flew with us then led the vagrant demon troops to head in a different direction from us.”

“Hm.....”

Then again, when carrying out the first battle in order to execute this aerial attack, the quick footed demons gathered by Lucifer did not obtain any obvious battle results.

Even though those battles started at various locations in order to support Adramelech’s troops should be the doing of Lucifer’s subordinates, but compared to using Adramelech’s strength and reputation as bait and using new equipment to execute aerial attacks, their actions were too low key.

Was that Lucifer willing to accept this kind of job?”

“I’ll confirm it with Satan later.....”

Under the illumination of the two huge blue stars and the countless stars, the night of the Demon World was unexpectedly bright.

But even so, night was still night. The strong wind which was also present in the daytime blew across the sky, trying to block the light in the night sky.

The mountain next to the lake where Satan and the others based themselves was eerily quiet, as for the camp of the Iron Scorpions, countless touches were lit, in the middle of the two factions, was the battlefield where fresh scars from the battles in the day were still present.

Demons, who do not need to eat, do not require logistics, they also do not set up camp like in human battles.

The soldiers maintained the formation in the day in their various positions, guarding against the enemy's attacks.

But even so, living things still need sleep biologically, so the Iron Scorpion warriors will take turns to sleep.

“Alright.”

A small shadow watched those torches from afar with a smile.

“It's about time to start, and, because I dislike troublesome things, so what Satan instructed.....yeah, I leave it to you to handle.”

“.....Yes.”

Lucifer gave instructions to a former vagrant demon next to him, and the suddenly appointed demon nodded with an expression of surprise.

“Then, it should be about time.”

After saying this, purple beams exploded in the night time wastelands.

The countless heat rays wrecked havoc in the Iron Scorpions’ camp.

“Go!”

Then Lucifer ordered the group of demons following behind him to launch surprise attacks.

The waves of noises of alertness quickly spread around the Iron Scorpions’ camp, but Lucifer chose to ignore this and left directly.

By the time the Iron Scorpions warriors woke up because they discovered the attack, the attackers would have all moved to another place.

Implemented by a small number of elites, this was a night attack which was extremely normal in the human world.

The purpose was not to defeat the enemy soldiers, but to cause the enemies to feel shaken and worsen their fatigue.

“Ha, hahaha! No matter how I fight and hit, it’s too fun!”

As Lucifer let out sounds of joy, he ran wildly through the Iron Scorpions' camp which was lit up by torches at night.

“What is it what is it! You can't see at night, you poisonous bugs whose only strength is being hard!”

Lucifer's heat rays easily pierced through the metal skin of the Iron Scorpions, forget about inflicting uneasiness, smashing through the enemies, Lucifer might be able to annihilate one or two troops by himself.

But the enemies were the Iron Scorpions, not a normal small clan.

“Hm?”

Lucifer, ignoring Satan's instructions, taking action on his own accord and carrying out a massacre at night in a carefree manner, suddenly felt that his movements have slowed down.

“What's going on.....?”

Even though Lucifer planned to leave the night ambush because he felt danger, his wings could not generate enough propelling force.

“You will stop now, vagrant demon of the wastelands.”

The voice came from behind him.

“Wha.....guh!”

Lucifer was sent flying by a powerful impact.

Even though it was just a simple impact, it could not be dampened with his wings or demonic magic. Sent flying, Lucifer hit the nearby ground, but the shocks did not end here.

Even if he hit the ground, Lucifer’s body was still dragged along the ground like he was being pressed against a grater.

“Ugh.....this, this is.....”

Lucifer kept trying to resist by extending his wings, but the mysterious power controlling his body did not weaken at all.

“Damn!”

Just as Lucifer was busy resisting, he realized that a rock resembling a sharp tooth was approaching this place, Lucifer gave up on resisting that force, and like what Satan did in the past, he shot up countless demonic magic orbs through the force of his own will.

He did not specially aim, and did not care if there were comrades still around him, and directly started shooting heat rays in all directions.

“Uwah!”

Before being pierced by the sharp rock, Lucifer who felt the power restricting his body frantically escaped to the sky.

“How close.....which guy did that.”

In order to avoid being restricted by the same power, after Lucifer rose rapidly, he extended his wings, turned around and looked down at the ground.

Among the camp which was made a mess by his own night ambush attack, he discovered demonic magic with an especially high presence.

“.....Sigh, I knew that only you would have this capability.”

“This is the first time we met like this right, vagrant demon of the wastelands.”

The one standing there, was undeniably the leader of the Iron Scorpions, Alsiel.

“You came out quickly, could it be that for you guys, even the boss had to do night sentry as well?”

“Do you think we would be stupid enough not to guard against a night attack? Only you were not seen during the day. So it was best that I stay wary as well.”

“I see, looks like it was your prediction that was a notch above?”

“I can kill you right now, you know?”

“It would be better for you not to do it? Even if you might be able to win against me, it would be impossible for you to walk away from it unscathed. Like this, Adramelech and the others, who would know you are injured through my comrades who sprung this night ambush with me, might just attack in one go.”

Of course, it was impossible for Alsiel to have not considered this, he only intentionally mentioned this topic to probe the shrewdness of his opponent.

Even though it did not show on his face, Alsiel was actually very surprised.

He did not expect that even the vagrant demon of the wastelands would no longer aimlessly cause trouble, but would even decide his tactics based on the future.

Who was it that caused Lucifer to develop a habit of thinking. The answer was obvious.

“.....Go back and report to your leader, we are not so weak as to become tired from these small acts. We will viciously attack all at once tomorrow to wipe all of you out. Do not think that only your side knows how to scout.”

“Yeah, I will help to convey it.”

Lucifer showed an underhanded smile like he was planning to play around with his opponent.

“But I cannot guarantee that our boss will follow your plans.”

After saying this, Lucifer flew high into the sky and disappeared into the faraway sky.

Alsiel did not let down his guard, and until after he confirmed that Lucifer and the others have truly retreated, he allowed the damage reports to come in from various locations.

Then he told the commanders of all the troops about the situation of the damage this time and scolded them on the spot.

Because the enemy was underestimated, the Iron Scorpions lost three thousand warriors in just one day.

Even though the whole army was rather complacent because they had overwhelmingly won the Ashen Horns ten years ago, once all the soldiers knew that such serious damage was taken on the first day, the instances of being careless would be reduced.

As long as this result was achieved, then the deaths of the three thousand warriors would have some value.

“From tomorrow onwards, things will no longer go so smoothly for you. Satan.”

Alsiel said this to the figure which was hidden in the darkness and could not be seen, the enemy general situated far away.

“That was what Alsiel said.”

“I say. Even though I told you not to act on your own, how can you lead by example like this.”

After Lucifer returned and reported the results of the night ambush, Satan said this in a vexed manner.

Different from Adramelech and Camio, Lucifer had never led any subordinates before, so after allowing him to act independently, he did something unexpected after all.

It would have been fine if Lucifer was the only unlucky one, because no instructions to retreat were given for the night ambush this time, so whether it was the vagrant demons or the Iron Scorpions, more sacrifices than expected had occurred.

“.....Sigh, because the important goal was achieved, I will let you off for now. The other party would be wary afterwards, so no more night ambushes

would be carried out for the time being. You can join the guerrilla forces of the overall battle together with Camio.”

“Seriously, if you want to praise me, then be more honest about it.”

Lucifer said unhappily, but Satan, who was not giving praises in the first place, was not listening to Lucifer at all.

Satan was already concerned about other things.

“Then.”

Two demons were standing next to Lucifer.

Their limbs were restrained by demonic magic and physical ropes, spears held by the strong Ashen Horns were also pressed against their back.

“Both of you probably think it’s strange right. Why aren’t you killed and even bought to this kind of place.”

Those were two Iron Scorpion warriors.

The true purpose of the night ambush troops led by Lucifer was not to cause chaos among the Iron Scorpions.

But to take the opportunity of the fact that it was night and the chaos to

obtain ‘captives’ and return without being discovered by the leader of the Iron Scorpions.

The reason why they did not chose to capture the injured soldiers in the day was so that the Iron Scorpions will not sense that ‘they will be taken away if they lived’.

In the Demon World, the concept of ‘captives’ still did not exist.

Enemy soldiers are targets to be killed, there was no need for such an act like capturing. The concepts of life and death and family were completely different from humans, hostages did not have any trade value at all.

But in reality, enemy soldiers are important information vaults when analyzing battle situations.

Equipment, allocation, members, tactics, all these were precious information which would bring an advantage to their army.

But if Alsiel found out that his subordinates were captured alive by the enemy, he would immediately deduce the concept of ‘captives’.

Of course, with Alsiel’s ability, he would deduce the concept of ‘captives’ sooner or later. In addition, he might sense Satan’s intentions based on the actions of their end. But of course, the later it happens, the better.

“Ugh.....”

“W, what do all of you plan to do!”

There was confusion rather than fear within the gazes of the Iron Scorpions.

To the demon warriors, being captured by the enemy equals death. However, because every demon warrior was already mentally prepared for death, they did not fear getting killed.

On the contrary, the situation of being strangely kept alive was what was weird.

“Let’s start from introductions. My name is Satan. I am the leader of the army currently fighting with all of you.”

““!””

The gazes of the two Iron Scorpions showed surprise, but in the next instant, the two of them were faced with an even more shocking encounter.

“I’m sorry, being so rough to both of you. I will loosen your bindings now. Stand up.”

The man who called himself the leader of the enemy, not only did he not kill them, he even said that he would loosen their bindings.

However, the demonic magic and ropes restraining the both of them were really removed. Even though the Ashen Horns were still pointing spears in

their direction, and their own power would not be effective against the enemy leader at all, the two Iron Scorpions who still believed that they were going to be killed, were showing expressions like they were thinking about how to put up a final resistance.

In comparison, Satan's expression was showing that he felt that the determination of the two Iron Scorpions was very interesting.

“Don't worry. As long as both of you do not step out of line, I will not kill you. I only have a few questions to ask you. As long as both of you answer honestly, other than immediately releasing both of you back to the Iron Scorpion camp, I will fulfill any other requests you have. How about it, sounds rather good right?”

““.....?””

“Talking about the possibilities of both of you dying later on, it would only be trying to harm us, or escaping back to the Iron Scorpion base. Other than that, both of you can do anything you want. Oh yes, why don't I, as the leader, personally introduce the newest group in the Demon World to both of you. How about it, want to come along?”

The two Iron Scorpion warriors, stared at Satan like they were looking at a strange creature.

The names of the two Iron Scorpion warriors were Illusium and Xichgan respectively.

Even though Illsium and Xichgan were surprised, they still obediently followed behind the demon called Satan whose back faced them in an unguarded manner and did not even bring a guard.

The current base of the Ashen Horns was within a mountain beside a lake, a city like space, and the enemy's leader actually offered to show them around.

“We are the ‘Demon King Army’, the earliest members were only me, Camio and the Pahalo Denino, a small group. Afterwards, with the help of Lucifer and Adramelech, various clans were gathered, and we grow into a large group which was able to fight directly with you Iron Scorpions.....”

Without any restraint, Satan explained to the both of them about the whole army who were fighting against the Iron Scorpions with the bright name of ‘Demon King Army’.

“Even though it might be hard to believe, we do not fight in order to eradicate all of you. Rather than that, we hope all of you can also join us, the ‘Demon King Army’.”

“.....What kind of, idiotic things are you saying.”

Illusium mumbled. Even though Xichgan froze when he saw Illusium interrupt the enemy leader, Satan himself was not bothered by the insult thrown by the enemy soldier.

“Don't worry, I'm already used to hearing these words. Camio was like this

at the beginning as well. Even though he also took in a stinky brat from another clan.”

Satan started speaking as he smiled.

“But, because we recently achieved a certain level of scale and results, so even vagrant demons whom we met for the first time are willing to listen to us seriously. We’re here. This place is the key to the ‘Demon King Army’ which I have thought of.”

After saying this, Satan stopped in front of a certain metal door.

In this cave running through the mountain, after a series of modifications over a long period of time, it had become a place suitable for living, but from the size of the door, it can be seen that some places have retained their high roofs and spacious areas.

The mixed presences of a large number of demons could be felt from the other side of the door.

“Yosh.”

Once Satan pushed the door open with some force, the two of them immediately felt the bustling activity and energy within.

““Wha……!””

Illusium and Xichgan let out gasps of surprise at the same time.

The scene on the other side of the door completely exceeded their expectations.

In the space large enough to contain one thousand Ashen Horns, there were various kinds of demons gathered within fighting with one another.

But that was not the normally seen massacre. It was seeing the other party as a comrade, undergoing simulation training in order to raise their abilities.

Even though the figures of the Ashen Horns and Pahalo Denino clan which made up the main fighting forces of the ‘Demon King Army’ could be seen, but in this place, they were the minority.

No less than fifty kinds of demons were not killing each other, but were gathered in one place and training.

Demons who were training their techniques, demons maintaining their weapons, demons training their magic, even though there were all kinds of demons here, one thing was clear, no matter where one goes in the Demon World, this scene could not be seen.

“Hey~ Belasha.”

After glancing in satisfaction at the surprised Illusim and Xichgan, Satan called out someone’s name.

“Oh~”

Next, a small and thin man walked out from the various kinds of demons.

That was a simply dressed man from a small Goblin clan whose height did not even reach the Iron Scorpions' waist.

“Lord Satan, do you need something?”

“These two are Illusium and Xichgan. I want to register them as the backup members to the 15th guerrilla troops. I am giving them a tour in order to convince them, so these two will probably go to you later. I'm counting on you.”

“Yes yes yes, I understand. Illusium and Xichgan right. But Lord Satan, even though the guerrilla troops are fine, wouldn't it be better to have them take care of the flying dragons? Recently that place has been complaining about being shorthanded.”

“Hm.....but I want them to get used to the atmosphere here first, so the guerrilla troops would be better. The flying dragon tasks are still rather challenging, so even if they are shorthanded, we can't replenish the numbers carelessly.”

“Yes yes yes, you're right. I understand. We'll do as you say then.”

After the goblin called Belasha bowed his head in an inelegant manner, he left with light steps.

“Just now, was that.....the Goblin clan?”

“It would be a vagrant demon from the Goblin clan. Even though he looks like this, he’s really good at wielding daggers, he even has the negotiation skills to lead crude and violent guys, so I appointed him as the troop leader for the guerrilla troops.”

Satan replied after Xichgan’s question.

“B, but a troop led by a goblin.....can they really form a fighting force?”

“A commander position should be taken up by someone with a calm mind and has a good eye for people. That guy’s troop is very strong you know. Even though Belasha himself is a weak demon, under him are strong vagrant demons born from beast demon and skull demon clans. They are considered representatives here who are stronger than others.”

Satan said this as he pointed at his own head and patted the shoulders of the two stunned demons.

“Then, we should go to the next place now.”

After saying this, Satan left behind the both of them who flinched as they were patted on the shoulder and started to move on to the next location.

“Is this.....some kind of factory?”

Satan nodded in response to Illusium’s question.

“That’s right. This place is managed by the Dorudolf clan, so if you feel that your hands are nimble enough, you can tell Belasha, and ask him to transfer you here.”

In this place described as a factory by Illusium, they were many Dorudolfs, short and stout minority clan members walking around.

The Dorudolf clan was a clan who lived underground, and were a clan skilled at making items with demonic magic.

“The equipment on the flying dragons and the maintenance of the weapons are all handled here. But, look at this. Hey~Daeglif!”

Satan called out someone’s name again. When they saw the appearance of the demon who came, Illusium and Xichgan’s eyes widened once more.

The demon called Daeglif was of a Giant clan.

Even though the subspecies were all included, the Giant clan were spread around various lands in the Demon World, a clan with a large population, they were normally seen as stupid demons who have no good points other than brute force.

“What is it.....Lord Satan.....is it new people.....”

After Daeglif said this slowly, he looked towards Illusium and Xichgan.

“Yeah. They are Illusium and Xichgan. Even though they are demon from the Iron Scorpions who are fighting with us right now, they will join Belasha’s troop later. Their armour and equipment seem to have been all destroyed by Lucifer, so even if it is for emergency use, please help them prepare some equipment.”

“Hoho.....leave it to me.....”

Daeglif nodded, pulled out someone resembling a vine plant from his waist pouch and forcefully placed it on Illusium’s shoulder from the front.

“W, what are you doing?”

Illusium shouted frantically, but Daeglif was not bothered at all, and continued to carefully placed the vine at Illusium’s waist, leg, and from head to toe and the top, and would bend his thick fingers every single time like he was calculating something.

After Xichgan went through the same experience and fainted from fright, Daeglif exhaled from his nose in a troubled manner.

“Foosh.....currently we do not have.....anything matching both these, guys’ measurements, they have to be separately made.”

“Then please try your best to handle it as quickly as possible. There will be many of their comrades joining later on, so it’s best you make the preparations to mass produce them.”

“I understand.....first, come back, tomorrow. Illusium and, Xichgan.”

After saying this in a slow manner, Daeglif turned around and left.

“Even though that guy is from the Giant clan, his hands are strangely nimble. After going through the guidance of the Dorudolf clan, he even learnt how to forge metal, sew cloth and leather, so rather than fighting outside, he would be more useful staying here and working, so he had already stayed here to make the clothes he likes, and did it for more than ten years.”

A Giant demon actually able to make clothes. Why was there such a funny thing? But Illusium and Xichgan knew that what they saw just now all confirmed what Satan said.

“Then, the next place is the last. After that, we will return to the first issue.....”

The last place Illusium and Xichgan were bought to was the large hall where they were detained in.

But different from the beginning, a few more demons were added.

““!””

The both of them flinched with nervousness. Because the enemy generals have all gathered.

Ashen Horn leader Adramelech, the strongest vagrant demon Lucifer, and Camio, whom even Alsiel respectfully called the Demon Bird General and was wary of.

These were all opponents who Illusium and Xichgan would not be able to match no matter how much they resisted.

Satan stood in front of Illusium and Xichgan and started to make introductions for the both of them in a tone not so different from what he had used so far.

“Even though I think both of you should know them, but from this demon in order, this is Adramelech, Lucifer and Camio. They are the core members of the ‘Demon King Army’ I lead. With what you saw so far, I think both of you should understand, the purpose of the ‘Demon King Army’, is not to annihilate opposing clans. But the unification of the Demon World.”

In front of these great demons, Illusium and Xichgan did not dare to move. But Satan’s words did reach their ears.

“Even though it is difficult for both of you to believe right now, but I plan to have you Iron Scorpions and your leader Alsiel join us. But Alsiel is not the type who will obediently join with just an invitation. So I have been thinking how to make all of you join us. The final conclusion would be that I have to win all of you and Alsiel.”

Satan said heavily.

“Next I am going to order both of you to betray for the time being. Tell us everything you know about Alsiel’s battle plans. But, I promise both of you. I will definitely not have both of you remain as traitors. I will definitely integrate the three people here, Alsiel and all of you under my command.”

““.....””

Illusium and Xichgan could not help but look at each other.

Then they thought about this strange demon in front of them, and the meaning behind the scenes they saw.

“Then, I’m going to start asking.”

In a compliant manner, the two Iron Scorpions waited for what Satan was going to say next.

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“Left flank troop, scattered by enemy ambush! Unable to maintain formation, beginning retreat!”

“Right flank guerrilla troop, engaging with the enemy’s aerial troop! Advancement is less than half of what is planned!”

“Central troops seemed to have engaged with the Ashen Horn main forces!

Adramelech and other countless small clans are executing waves of attacks at them. The troops on both flanks are in chaos, and cannot support the central troops in time! Once the surrounding battles are broken through, it would be difficult to continue maintaining this!”

“What is it like this.....!”

After handling all the reports, Alsiel angrily analyzed the battle situation.

Even though Alsiel had warned Lucifer in advance that an all out battle will occur, he had already carefully prepared in advance, so this should be a city attack battle where Alsiel, who had successfully protected his clan for many years, should be able to easily win after executing battle tactics on various areas on the battlefield.

However, after starting the battle, the advancement route of the Iron Scorpions were seen through by the enemy.

Especially the troops advancing at the left flank, as if their codes have been completely seen though, their enemies were close on their heels.

The secret of the flying dragon troops suddenly appearing in the sky have not been solved, and Alsiel who should have an advantage in terms of military power and ability, clearly understood that the Iron Scorpions were in trouble.

“It can’t be helped. Even though I did not plan to dispatch them so early.”

Alsiel frowned, and issued his command to the messenger soldier.

“Summon the three thousand warrior troops stationed at the Ashen Horns stone city! If we do not dispatch all our fighting power, we will be unable to defeat the enemy!”

“Un, understood!”

Just as the messenger soldier rushed out to carry out Alsiel’s instructions, a new messenger soldier pushed him away and entered.

“Urgent report! The stone city has been attacked!”

““What!””

Alsiel and the warrior who received the instructions shouted in surprise.

“Is it Camio’s troops?”

Alsiel mentioned the name of the great enemy demon who had not appeared, the messenger shook his head and replied,

“We did not discover any signs of Camio! But we have been attacked by the flying demon troops with the Pahalo Denino clan as its core, not only have we been attacked.....the Ashen Horns stone city seemed to have been regained by the enemy!”

Even if he was afraid of angering the clan leader, the messenger soldier still mentioned the report filled with despair.

Alsiel was speechless.

It would be understandable if they were defeated by the troops led by the Demon Bird General, but how can three thousand Iron Scorpion troops lose to just one Pahalo Denino troop?

“What of the three thousand warriors in the stone city?”

“That.....there is no information, I’m afraid they’re already.....”

“Ugh!”

Alsiel gritted his teeth in anger, and ascended rapidly into the air like a rocket.

Looking down at the battlefield from the air, the Iron Scorpions were obviously at a disadvantage. The enemy flying dragon troops fighting far away, after discovering Alsiel’s figure, they actually shot demonic magic orbs in this direction even though it was impossible to hit him from that distance, that was how relaxed the enemy was.

After unhappily getting rid of the demonic magic orb with his gaze, Alsiel showed a stony expression after discovering Adramelech’s and Lucifer’s troops.

“What happened.....since Adramelech and Lucifer are over there, then where is Camio.....”

Even if one or two battle strategies were executed now, it would not cause a significant effect on the current battle situation.

The enemy leader Satan, using some kind of unknown magic, actually seen through the battle strategies cultivated by the Iron Scorpions over the years.

The methods which Alsiel could use right now were few.

“.....Should we retreat?”

This tactic was also a historical reason why the Iron Scorpions were able to grow this strong.

Alsiel was very clear of the meaning of this action of retreating. Escaping a strong enemy was not considered a loss, but a setup to obtain victory in the future.

Even though many comrades were already killed by other clans before this thought was developed, after the clan members slowly understood the importance of escaping, the forces of the Iron Scorpions rapidly grew stronger.

This time Alsiel acted in response to Satan's challenge to annihilate a future enemy, but it seemed like this judgement was too hasty.

Of course, this was a humiliation. But in order to obtain an opportunity for get revenge for the insult, he had to bear with it now.

After Alsiel made up his mind, he prepared to return to the ground to issue the order to retreat to various locations.

Just at this moment.

“What.....is that?”

Alsiel looked behind him. That was not Adramelech or Lucifer’s battlefield.

Behind the Iron Scorpion clan. The direction the Iron Scorpions came from.

Something was approaching this place from behind them.

Those were not reinforcements. Other than the three thousand soldiers in the stone city, the Iron Scorpion warriors have all gathered at this battlefield.

If so, which clan was that?

Alsiel focused and looked.

“That’s not, a clan.....what.....what exactly is that!”

Alsiel shouted in surprise.

He knew that Satan’s army gathered many vagrant demons. In reality, there

were also many clans on the battlefield besides the Ashen Horns and the Pahalo Denino.

But what is that? A quantity never seen before, a mixed army of clans which he had never seen before were approaching this place like they were suddenly attack the back of the Iron Scorpions' army.

The quantity was close to ten thousand.

And no matter how he thought about it, that mysterious huge army were not reinforcements for the Iron Scorpions.

As if to confirm this thought, Alsiel discovered a member of the Pahalo Denino clan leading that mysterious army from the air.

Ten thousand soldiers were added to Satan's army, and chose to appear behind the Iron Scorpion army, causing Alsiel to momentarily feel despair.

He had never faced this kind of situation before.

No, rather than that, none of the demons in the Demon World have faced this before.

Even though it looked very backward from the viewpoint of the human world, Alsiel still frequently used tactics not restricted by the common sense of the Demon World, and brought prosperity to the Iron Scorpions.

And this demon who was one step ahead of him, will end this prosperous path.

The means of attack have been sealed, and the path of retreat have been cut off.

The Iron Scorpions still had an advantage in terms of total numbers. As long as sacrifices were willing to be made, retreat should be possible.

But after retreating, the power of the Iron Scorpions will be greatly reduced. The mysterious man who organized a terrifying mixed army, Satan. He and his clan members might be forced to live a life of fearing the figure of that man while being hunted by other clans.

Right now, whether they advanced or retreated, only Hell would be waiting for them.

Even so.

“As an Iron Scorpion warrior, we can only kill as many as we can!”

“Adramelch! That guy is coming!”

Adramelech blasted away the Iron Scorpion warriors around him with one

attack of his magic spear, then looked in the direction which Lucifer pointed towards.

Just as the strike force led by Adramelech and Lucifer were defeating the Iron Scorpions like they were breaking through a bamboo forest and were about to penetrate into the main camp of the enemy.

“Is he coming? Iron Scorpion leader!”

“Even though he doesn't look like he is giving up, it would be troublesome if he gets serious!”

“I know that! Hmph!”

Adramelech faced Alsiel who was flying in this direction and placed his magic spear upright on the ground of the battle with a smile.

The tip and axe portion of the magic spear was dyed in the blood of the warriors on the blood covered battlefield.

“Fuuuuuu.....Alsiel, protecting my body is the life which had flowed within your warrior's bodies!”

The ice armour which covered Adramelech's whole body as he raised his spear once more was made from fresh blood.

“Back down!”

The instant Adramelech, wearing an armour not made from magic ice but blood, used his spear had impacted violently with Alsiel's iron fist as he flew here with high speed.

“Owahh!”

Just this impact, was enough to send Lucifer flying far away even though he should have guarded against it.

A meteor crater like hole appeared in the ground around Adramelech's feet, and Adramelech himself also knelt on the ground because he could not absorb this force.

“Iron Scorpion warriors!”

Alsiel, who overpowered Adramelech's burly body and strong armpower based on powr alone, shouted in a clear voice which could be heard on the whole battlefield,

“If we do not overcome this, the Iron Scorpions will have no future! Follow me, Alsiel! The target is the enemy leader!”

“Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!”

From various areas of the battlefield, the roars of the Iron Scorpion warriors who were in a disadvantageous position could be heard.

“Eh, the atmosphere feels different?”

Lucifer, who steadied himself after being blasted backwards, discovered that the Iron Scorpions had ignited their fighting spirit once more.

“Uh! Since that guy came here, that means Camio came from behind right? Why did it become like this?”

“.....This signifies.....how much they trust this guy!”

The one who answered Lucifer’s question was Adramelech.

In order to dissipate Alsiel’s power, he jumped backwards to increase the distance between them.

“Alsiel, the strongest warrior, personally came to the frontline to lead the warriors. Just like what we did just now. Just doing that would raise morale.”

“.....How simple. But it’s troublesome because it’s simple, what is that?”

What Lucifer saw, was the moment Alsiel spread his arms wide as the distance between him and Adramelech increased after the initial clash.

“Hm? That is!”

Adramelech also noticed it. Countless boulders from the battlefield floated up from behind Alsiel.

That was the psychic cannonballs which defeated many Ashen Horn warriors ten years ago.

“Wahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh?”

The countless boulders which flew over, fell down continuously just like ten years ago.

“Ugh! This continuous attack! How do we! Handle this!”

Adramelech started to swing his magic spear to shatter the boulders flying over.

“H, how do I know! There are so many uwah, it hurts!”

Lucifer was also overpowered by the numbers, and his wings were continuously hit by the flying boulders.

The secret behind the non-stop psychic cannonballs, would be letting the casters take turns to execute the cannon attacks, a series of wave attacks.

Even though the numbers which can be shot at one time decreases, as the demonic magic can be used over a long period, they would be able to execute cannon attacks without stopping.

This method of not relying on the power of a single attack, and changing to a wave attack method was also something Alsiel thought of over the long period of history.

The psychic cannonballs using the group power of the Iron Scorpions, suddenly forced Adramelech and Lucifer to go into a defensive mode, of course, Alsiel did not overlook this opportunity.

“Adramelech, Lucifer, even though you’re not the ones I’m looking for, I will still accept your heads first.”

After saying this, Alsiel emitted invisible telekinesis from his hands, and easily grabbed Adramelech and Lucifer who were already fully occupied just from evading the boulders.

“Ugoh? T, this is.....”

Adramelech shouted in surprise because he felt his body suddenly become heavier.

“Ah, damn it! What is this! It can’t be seen, isn’t that too underhanded!”

Even though he was not ambushed like during the night attack, not knowing if his attention was attracted by the psychic cannonballs, or Alsiel’s technique was too exquisite, Lucifer was also grabbed by Alsiel’s power.

“Magic ice armour? Purple heat rays? Just depending on that pure power and

not knowing how to polish battle techniques, both of you are not a match for us Iron Scorpions!”

“Hm! Ugh! Ugoh! Uwahh!”

“Wah, damn it! Bastard! It hurts! Owwww!”

Alsiel used demonic magic which could not be matched by a normal Iron Scorpion, used all his skill to seal Adramelech’s and Lucifer’s movements.

And at this moment, there were still many psychic cannonballs which were aimed at Adramelech and Lucifer.

The psychic cannonballs started to mercilessly hit the both of them whose movements suddenly became dull.

Of course, Adramelech and Lucifer would not be sliced up just like that. However, the one exerting telekinesis on them right now was Alsiel, and the Iron Scorpion warriors were still first rate warriors even though they did not match up to Alsiel.

“Ugh!”

“Damn it! Gwahh!”

Even though Adramelech tried to barely avoid the attacks with his dull movements, the quantity of the psychic cannonballs was simply too much,

continuously withstanding the surprisingly powerful cannoballs caused cracks to slowly appear in the blood ice armour.

Lucifer tried to use the similar method as before to shoot heat rays from the sky to attack Alsiel in order to escape his magic, but as spellcasters from the Iron Scorpions were surrounding Alsiel, and protecting him from getting hit by Lucifer's attacks, the restraining power did not weaken at all.

Both strike force leaders' movements were sealed at the same time, causing the advancement speed for the other demons to slow down, the Iron Scorpions started to even the odds in various locations.

But Alsiel also knew, even if him personally going to the frontline temporarily turned the tables, it would not last for long.

The mixed army led by Camio was rushing in from behind.

If the two armies meet, the Iron Scorpion army might just disintegrate in one go. Victory would need to be assured before that, only by concentrating the troops and breaking through in a certain direction can a path to survival be found.

“Mages! Come and help! Anyone will do, first completely seal one of their movements!”

“Ah, yes!”

“Lucifer!”

The judgement of the Iron Scorpion mages led by Alsiel was correct.

Lucifer, who was able to interfere with the magic casting through long range attacks, was the biggest obstacle at the scene.

The Iron Scorpion mages who helped Alsiel block the attack just now used telekinesis magic simultaneously on Lucifer, beautifully sealing his movements.

“D, damn it! Y, you bunch of small fry!”

Lucifer tried to escape with all his might until the veins in his forehead started to bulge, but he was unable to free himself from even just Alsiel’s power alone.

“Kill him!”

With Alsiel’s orders, the swords, spears and psychic cannonballs of the Iron Scorpions flew towards Lucifer.

“With this, we would be able to get rid of one troublesome enemy.....”

“You won’t succeed!”

“Ugh.....”

In the next instant, many things happened at once.

All the Iron Scorpions attacking Lucifer were thrown backwards. Not only that, the telekinesis magic restricting Lucifer and Adramelech was cut off.

The cutting off of the demonic magic flowing between the casters and Lucifer caused a backlash onto the casters.

“Yeurgh!”

“Ugah!”

All the casters surrounding Alsiel could not withstand the impact, and were blown backwards just like that.

“Guh!”

Alsiel’s body also swayed greatly because his telekinesis magic was cut.

A demon holding a sword was standing between Lucifer and Alsiel.

The demon who came had two horns, an ice sword, and huge hoofs which stood firmly on the ground.

“.....You finally appeared, Satan.....”

“You also appeared after delaying for quite a while, Alsiel.”

Satan, who saved Lucifer from the blades of the Iron Scorpions, placed the ice sword which appeared to have just been swung onto his shoulder.

“Hey, Lucifer, Adramelech. Follow the plan and retreat with the army.”

“Annoying!”

Satan gave the order to Lucifer behind him, but Lucifer who was freed from the telekinesis was burning with anger.

“Actually looking down on me! I’m not going to let this drop like this!”

“.....Lucifer, back down.”

“Stop joking, Adramelech! Already being looked down upon, how can we retreat so easily.....”

“Hey, Lucifer.”

Satan turned back at Lucifer who was about to attack the Iron Scorpions around him with an annoyed expression on his face.

“Your carelessness was to blame. If I did not interfere in the middle, you would have already lost to Alsiel. Admit it.”

“What did you say!”

“This guy must be unhappy about the results as well, so if you want to fight with him again, there will be opportunities in the future. But leave it to me first, just back down.”

“.....!”

Even though Lucifer could not hide his anger, under Satan’s and Adramelech’s restraint, he still reluctantly pulled back his killing aura.

The one who was unwilling to let it drop was Alsiel instead.

“You want your army to retreat?”

“Oh, that’s right, that’s right, I’m sorry, Alsiel. It’s rare for you to personally come to the frontlines. I came today to discuss a proposal with you. Let’s have a one-on-one match with me next.”

“.....What did you say?”

Alsiel took some time to understand Satan’s words. Even if Satan said this in a direct manner, the contents were still difficult to understand.

“Let me think, if you win, you can kill me, and my army can be handled by you in any way at the same time. But, if I win.....”

Satan pointed his ice blade at Alsiel, and declared loudly.

“Iron Scorpion leader Alsiel. You and all the Iron Scorpion warriors, will be absorbed by me.”

Satan’s proposal, was simply unbelievable to Alsiel.

A one-on-one match between the generals.

And the victor will instantly become the leader of all of the demons present?

This overly ridiculous proposal, caused Alsiel be unable to make a decision even after a long time.

What is that guy saying----those were Alsiel’s only thought.

“Honestly speaking, we have already won this battle. But as long as you put up a tough resistance, you would be able to bring the Iron Scorpions and escape this battlefield by making huge sacrifices. You appeared here because you thought this way. Am I right?”

He was seen through. Even though he felt anxious, whether Alsiel confirmed or denied it now, the situation will not change. Because what Alsiel should do, would be to defeat the man in front of him, that was all there is.

However, the demon in front of him said even stranger words.

“You’re not willing to retreat just like this right. Let me give you a chance to resist. However, if you’re satisfied, follow me. With this, whether it’s you or the Iron Scorpions, there will not be any unnecessary sacrifices.”

“.....Do you think, that you would be able to defeat me alone?”

“If I did not any chances or ways to win, I will definitely not say this. But because I am unable to guarantee a victory, you have an advantage as well. When we are having a one-on-one match, I will definitely not attack anyone else. The army led by Camio have also stopped advancing when I appeared here. I will not let anyone disturb us.”

Even though it was hard to believe, Satan seemed to be really planning to have a one-on-one match with Alsiel.

Satan also looked like a demon with a significant amount of ability, but even so, he was not hiding any overwhelming power like Adramelech or Lucifer.

This meant that this man’s ability was in his intelligence and battle tactics.

“Your words do not contain any evidence of reliability at all.”

Alsiel went into a fighting stance without any openings.

“Who can guarantee that no one else would interfere when I am fighting one-

on-one with you. This applies to you as well. Do you really think that the Iron Scorpion warriors will play along with your farce?”

“Those who think like this will have the ability to lead everyone here.”

Satan said this, but he immediately replied,

“If anyone only either side plays dirty, when that happens, the group battle will just continue according to the past traditions of the Demon World. That would be fine right? Because that would be as normal.”

“.....”

Alsiel could not help but blink a few times.

Even though it might be a little idiotic, he also agreed with Satan.

Even if the one-on-one battle did not happen, the result would just be as normal, what was he being so careful about?

“But, talking about what would be different from the Demon World in the past.”

Satan used his hand not holding the sword to point up at the red sky.

“That would be as long as you and I stick to the agreement of the one-on-one

match, the number of demons who survive will increase, and a stronger group will be born.”

At this instant, Alsiel saw a never seen before scene in the direction Satan pointed towards.

A large group of demons, shouting loudly as they gathered in a huge building.

Adramelech, Lucifer, Camio, a large group of demons he had never seen before, and himself were all there.

All the demons in the entire Demon World were all submitting to him.

The one who could achieve it, which one within this scene would it be?

“.....Be more careful about what you say.”

“Hm?”

“If a bigger group will be born after fighting with me, that will only happen after you win. Deciding right now that you would win, isn’t it too early.”

“.....Ah, you noticed.”

Satan smiled without any guilt.

“But if you win, I don’t think it would be a loss if you absorbed the subordinates I cultivated? Sigh, even though it would be a little difficult combining it all together, that would depend on your capability.”

“Hmph.”

Alsiel snorted at Satan’s suggestion.

“Alright, I will accept your proposal, and fight one-on-one with you.”

“Oh!”

“But!”

Alsiel glared at Satan who showed some signs of joy.

“I am Alsiel! The proud leader of the Iron Scorpions! My rule requires no aid from other demons! When I win, no matter how much time it would take, I would destroy everything you have left behind!”

“.....You’re really stubborn, just like your appearance.”

Faced with Alsiel’s declaration, Satan smiled happily instead and picked up his ice sword once again.

“Sigh, but this is why it would be worth recruiting you.”

Satan and Alsiel increased their demonic magic in one go, and the attention of all the warriors on the battlefield focused on the both of them.

The ice sword of the young demon from a weak clan, Satan, and the iron claws of the noble clan leader, clashed violently in the wilderness of the Demon World.

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“T, then what happened afterwards?”

Chiho excitedly leaned over the kotatsu to ask for the continuation, and Ashiya said with a smile,

“Since I’m here now, the result is obvious. I lost to Demon King-sama in the one-on-one battle, and with this, the Iron Scorpions joined the ‘Demon King Army’.”

How was it like to live in the Demon World?

Because Chiho had some questions about Maou’s mantle, the story of the meeting of Maou, Urushihara and Ashiya were brought out.

When she came to her senses, the sun was about to set.

“Demon King-sama who brought the Iron Scorpions under his command, started to officially act under the name ‘Demon King Army’, and ‘Demon King Satan’ who called himself the leader of the ‘Demon King Army’,

became an existence well known amongst the nearby demons. The Demon King Army Sasaki-san knows about was formed at that time.”

“So in the end, the reinforcements brought by Camio-san, where were they from?”

“Ah, those were reinforcements.....how should I say it.....hm, yes. That seemed to be a wartime acquisition, or more like the result of battle strategy.”

“Strategy?”

“When Adramelech and Lucifer were causing chaos on the battlefield, the reason why Lord Camio was not seen was because he was on a long distance mission during the battle period, continuing to recruit small clans and vagrant demons. Because all of the Iron Scorpion warriors headed for the battlefield, no one sensed this action; that was the truth behind why we were trapped in the middle.”

“Oh.....so the demons battled sometimes and negotiated sometimes to be able to gather together.....eh? But I don’t think the Malebranches appeared in the story just now.....”

Chiho placed her hand under her chin and said this in a troubled manner.

The citizens of the Demon World from the foreign world Ente Isla who Chiho met before, there was Ashiya Shiro – Alsiel in front of her, the owner of this apartment Demon King Satan – Maou Sadao, Lucifer – Urushihara Hanzo, and Demon Minister Camio whose title in the story was different from what

Chiho knew, and the Malebranches, the subordinates of one of the Generals like Ashiya and Urushihara, Malacoda.

“The meeting with the Malebranches occurred much later. I remember it was about the time we headed for the Demon King capital, Satanasarc. Before that, for there to be no difference in status between Lord Camio, Adramelech, me and Lucifer, we were not Demon Generals, but were called the ‘Four Kings’, and have our own titles. Including Demon King-sama, all five of us were called ‘King’, this was to honour the agreement Demon King-sama had with Lucifer.....with Urushihara in the beginning, where ‘he could leave any time if he was dissatisfied’.”

“So Camio-san was the first Demon General of the Demon King Army.”

“From the order of the meetings with Demon King-sama, it is like that.”

Ashiya nodded in confirmation.

“Lord Camio taught me many things. When Adramelech and I were in our prime, he was already rather advanced in age, and became and became an existence only remembered by the few noble clans who still recalled the past, but as Sasaki-san knows, he really is an energetic old man.”

“I also do not feel that Camio-san is an old person at all.”

Chiho gave a wry smile.

Because the Camio Chiho knew, was just a black fat chicken weakly lying in

a cardboard box in a Choshi beachhouse which can make ‘chirp chirp’ sounds while being chased by Maou’s ‘daughter’ Alas=Ramus, and almost became the ingredient of chicken curry after saying something inappropriate.

“So, did anything else happen afterwards?”

Chiho harboured some feelings of affection for Demon King Satan – Maou Sadao, so once she unexpectedly got a chance to know about Maou’s past, she actively wanted to investigate more, but uncoincidentally, the mobile phone in her bag started to vibrate because it received a message.

“Excuse me, let me check my phone.....ah!”

“Is something wrong?”

“Uh, my mother.....suddenly asked me to buy some things.”

“Then it can’t be helped. What happens later can be talked about another day when there is a chance. I’m sorry about today. Even though you came by, not only did Demon King-sama go out, even Bell and the others did not return in the end, and there is only me to keep you company.”

“It’s fine, even though it might be rude to Maou-san, I also heard some valuable things.....and.....”

When she reached this point, Chiho guiltily bowed her head and apologized to Ashiya.

“I’m sorry, it feels like I made you remember painful things.”

“Hm?”

Ashiya showed a confused expression. Even though he might feel awkward talking about the period of time when he had not matured, Chiho should not have any need to apologise.

Perhaps she understood what Ashiya was thinking, Chiho shook her head lightly.

“That’s not what I meant, because.....”

Chiho looked at Ashiya directly in the eyes and said,

“Whether it is Adramelech-san, or the warriors of the Ashen Horns and Iron Scorpions, and many of the vagrant demons.....right now, there are no longer here.”

“.....Ah.”

Ashiya finally understood what Chiho was worried about.

“Yes, that is true.”

The Demon King Army, led by Satan who unified the Demon World, other

than a portion of the warriors, most of them had participated in the invasion of Ente Isla.

And because of the counterattack from the human world with Hero Emilia in the lead, more than half of them had lost their lives.

Especially the Ashen Horns and the Iron Scorpions, they had remained as the main fighting forces until the later stages of the unifying of the Demon World, and carried a huge responsibility during the invasion of Ente Isla, therefore almost all of them had died during the war with the humans.

“Thank you for your concern.”

Ashiya honestly accepted Chiho’s kind intentions.

Honestly, just like the demons in the Demon World, the Demon King Army was also defeated because they lost in terms of power to the humans led by the Hero, so not considering regret and hatred, Ashiya did not have any special feelings about it.

But at this time, ‘humans’ will definitely ‘grieve’ for their head comrades. Even though to ‘humans’, they were invaders who brought a huge calamity and sinned greatly----the story of the demons was the same as well.

“Thank you for being willing to share these things with me, I will definitely not tell anyone.”

And Chiho also knew that her thoughts would definitely not be a good thing to those important friends of hers.

So she definitely would not tell anyone about the events of today. Regardless of what Ashiya was willing to tell her, what she had heard, or her own thoughts.

After Chiho said her thanks, she exhaled deeply to change her mood and after neatly keeping the cup which had contained the wheat tea to the sink, she went to the porch to put on her shoes.

“Then, I’ll be now. I’m sorry, for the fried eggs to be passed to Suzuno-san and Nord-san, please help me pass it to them.....I hope Urushihara-san can return soon.”

“.....About that. Since I confirmed that he would not carelessly spend money, even if he continues to stay at the hospital under the supervision of the landlady, there will not be much problems.....”

“Ahaha.....”

Ashiya said this with a serious tone, and Chiho could only reply with a wry laugh.

Urushihara Hanzo, resident of room 201, was forced to stay in hospital because of various reasons.

Because of some events recently, Ashiya and Maou had left Japan for some time and returned to Ente Isla, and because Urushihara met up with some trouble during this period of time, he was admitted to hospital under the arrangements of Shiba Miki, a mysterious lady who knew about the true identity of Maou and the others.

Even though Urushihara should be discharged soon, once he returns, he would probably cause trouble for Maou and Ashiya for reasons different from before.

Even though she felt bad for Maou and Ashiya, to the current Chiho, that was an irreplaceable scene in her daily life.

“Then, I’ll be taking my leave. Please help me send my greetings to Suzuno-san and Nord-san.”

“I understand. Please be careful on your way home.”

After sending Chiho off, and waiting until he could not hear any sound from the public corridor outside, it was only then did Ashiya sigh lightly.

Ashiya, who unexpectedly starting chatting about the past, as he watched the setting sun, he recalled some things which he did not tell Chiho.

Alsiel, who planned to win in an instant, was already at a disadvantage when he became aware of the situation.

Satan's ability greatly exceeded that of the Black Goat clan which Alsiel remembered.

The brains and blade of the demon bird swordmen, the power and magic of the Ashen Horn leader, and the techniques of the many vagrant demons and small clans with Lucifer in the lead, Satan pressed forward steadily by fully using these abilities and finally defeated Alsiel in the end.

He will be killed. His past experience caused Alsiel to think of this in reflex.

However, Satan's demonic magic did not take away Alsiel's life.

"The victor has been decided. From now on, the Iron Scorpions and their leader Alsiel, will have to join my.....'Demon King Army'."

"What did.....you say?"

"Even though you do not have an intelligence like Camio, you still have a mind which can think. Follow me. Do you want to have the name of the Iron Scorpions become many times more famous in the Demon World, and together with us, build a world where even the demons on the edge of the Demon World would feel awed just by hearing your name?"

"How can I agree to that kind of thing....."

Alsiel tried to protest. Bowing his head to a young demon, he did not want to do this thing which shamed the pride of a large noble clan.

However, Satan declared coldly,

“It’s fine if you’re not willing to do so, but if you die here meaninglessly, I will not let any of the surviving Iron Scorpions off.”

“I”

“As long as you live, all the Iron Scorpions will live. If you die here, all the Iron Scorpions will be buried with you. Choose, leader of a noble clan, are you someone who will rather sacrifice the lives of all your citizens to maintain your pride?”

Defeat and survival are linked.

Until now, Alsiel still felt that himself at that time still did not understand this.

But just from the results, Satan very patiently convinced him, and in the end, he had become the top ranked Demon General who was proud of being the close aide to Demon King Satan, assisting Satan’s and the Demon King Army’s rule.

“I really came to a faraway place.”

Ashiya looked out of the window and the scene of the streets constructed by the humans for their daily living.

“Even so, I still think that I did everything I could.....”

Mixed within the horns of the tofu store transmitted from far away, the sounds of the neighbouring female, who had already integrated into Ashiya’s and Maou’s life, returning home next door was heard from outside, Ashiya mumbled in a self-mocking manner after hearing this.

“Would I still be able to see that dream from that time again?”

No one could answer this question.

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The Iron Scorpions have joined Satan’s command.

For the demons of the Demon World, all the clans were enemies with one another, even so, this information still instantly spread to half of the Demon World.

The name of the demon who integrated Ashen Horn Adramelech and Iron Scorpion Alsiel under his command together with their armies also became widely known by the demons.

“It looks rather grand!”

Satan, who officially called himself ‘Demon King’ to external parties, said this after gathering Camio, Lucifer, Adramelech and Alsiel at a cave in the mountain by the lake.

“Then, since there are so many demons now, we need to find ways to make the internal operations of the group smoother. So I plan to build a ‘nation’.”

“‘Nation’?”

This unfamiliar term caused Alsiel to ask in surprise.

“That’s right. Since demons from so many different clans have joined the same group, they would need to be managed separately. Demons who are not good at fighting, demons who are good at making something. I will identify these demons and split them into groups. If anyone else is especially great, all of you would definitely quarrel right.”

“That’s true. At least my position definitely cannot be lower than that guy.”

Because he still bore a grudge for the telekinesis magic incident, even if Satan and Adramelech advised him, Lucifer still frequently expressed animosity to Alsiel.

“About all your positions, I will think of a nice title. Then, Alsiel.”

“.....”

“You’re basically working together with Camio.....don’t show such a stony face. You don’t have to swear loyalty to me now, just treat it as learning all you can about some techniques and intelligence from Camio in order to betray me in the future.”

“Ugh.....”

“Wahaha! If you want to harm Satan, I will not stay quiet about it!”

Adramelech boldly laughed at Alsiel who felt shaken because his thoughts were seen through.

“When the power of the ‘nation’ is sufficient, we will head to the south.”

“South.....don’t tell me you plan to challenge the Malebranches?”

Adramelech and Lucifer were also surprised at Camio’s words.

The Malebranches were a huge force in the Demon World which even Alsiel did not dare to attack, the head chief leading the clan, Malacoda, was praised as a great demon who came closest to the ‘Ancient Demon King’.

“Even though the Malebranches are any opponent who we have to face sooner or later, my goal is further ahead than that.”

“You said, further ahead.....don’t tell me?”

Alsiel, who seemed to have noticed something from this answer, spoke in surprise.

“That’s right. On the other side of the huge territory of the Malebranches. The only ‘ancient city’ in the Demon World, Satanasarc. The adobe of the Ancient Demon King.”

Demon King Satan and Demon General Alsiel, took the first step on the path of unify the Demon World here.

When they settled the whole of the Demon World, the Demon King Army which invaded the Demon World and was defeated by Hero Emilia, and reaching the foreign world----Japan’s Sasazuka, all this will happen 200 years later.



Short Story 2: Hataraku! Yusha-sama tachi -A long time ago-

はたらく勇者さま達！-a long time ago-



Wathewlama City was located in the center of the Great Otulima Desert which separated the Southern Continent into north and south areas, and before the invasion of the Demon Army, this place was considered a unique independent country in the Southern Continent.

As an oasis city, this place had flourishing trade since the olden times, but it was still in the middle of a large desert, so the nation's land where the humans lived on was not considered big at all.

After around twenty five square kilometers of the nation's land was surrounded by an oasis, streets and walls, it became a city nation as impregnable as a giant tortoise which had stopped in the middle of the desert.

There were not many citizens who were willing to settle in this environment with harsh weather, but because they were born in this kind of harsh environment, the Southern Continent had the strongest fighter troops.

Long before the invasion of the Demon Army. There were even records in the history of Ente Isla that as long as someone was supported by the people of Wathewlama, they would be able to rule over the Southern Continent.

Just from the results, Harlan nation which had the largest land in the Southern Continent, had formed an alliance with the rulers of Wathewlama City during the revival era, and borrowed military power from their doughty warriors----it was said that these warriors all had survival skills which allowed them to survive in the harsh environment of the large desert by themselves.

Thanks to this, the current Harlan Nation ruled over the entire southern area of the Southern Continent, which included the Great Otulima Desert.

From the revival era to the current era, what used to be a huge Harlan royal family started to split, the branch countries ruled by the royals who have not succeeded the nation of the main family, started to rise one after another in the northern part of the continent over a long period of history.

For the branch nations, they were formed mostly because of civil conflict or political change, and from just the results, the relationship between the countries of the main family and branch families became perilous, and small conflicts occur frequently near the country's borders.

From the point of view of the other continents, it was just a huge family clan constantly having civil strife, and because large scale battles do not happen often, the other continents did not plan to intervene, so unfortunately for the people of the Southern Continent, this situation was not solved even as the Demon Army invaded.

Faced with the invasion of Malacoda's army, forget about working together, the Harlan Nations did not even contact each other and were suppressed.

It was said that for these branch nations, whose relations with each other were this bad, the reason why they were able to overcome their animosities when Hero Emilia appeared and united as one to go against Malacoda's army at the northern side of the Southern Continent, was mainly because the warriors of Wathewlama exerted a huge influence.

Succeeding in liberating the Western Continent and Northern Continent, when Hero Emilia was attacking the Southern Continent, she did not choose the northern area which was influenced strongly by the origins of the Demon Army in the Central Continent, but landed on the southern area of the continent by taking a roundabout detour by sea route to try to fight back.

Emilia and the others, tenaciously made efforts to convince these kings and nobles of the branch countries who were still unwilling to work together at this kind of time.

In the end, the ruler of Wathewlama, Warrior Leader Lagides, gathered the warriors laying low in the desert, and after fighting a huge campaign never seen since the liberation battle in Holy Saint Aire Empire in the Western Continent, Harlun Nation was liberated. Malacoda's Army was forced back to the northern side of the desert.

Emilia and the others, who succeeded in liberating the southern side of the Southern Continent, when they were staying at one of the branch nations---- Harlan Tharja branch nation, they received information about Wathewlama City.

Even though Emilia and the others who had fought an intense battle with the main forces of Malacoda's army have already decided their next destination after completing their treatment and rest, at this time, the young king of Harlan Tharja, Erzamuha, invited Emilia and the others to the royal study and discuss something with them with a stern expression on his face.

“There is something wrong with the situation of Wathewlama City?”

“That should be the nation of the desert warriors~~who formed the core of the army~~during the liberation battle of the main family~~because Warrior Leader Lagides was at the frontlines at that time~~so I still remember~~”

Emerada frowned.

“Lady Emerada is correct.”

King Erzamuha nodded.

“It has been two weeks since the liberation battle of the main family, thanks to everyone, the branch families have also begun to actively discuss about the restoration. However, we have suddenly lost contact with Wathewlama who has volunteered to be the middleman.”

“The term lost contact sounds bad. Could it be that the Malacoda army in the north has done something?”

King Erzamuha seemed to be as worried as Alberto.

“This is a possibility, but like what everyone knows, during the liberation battle of the main family, the Wathewlama gathered a fighting force which will not lose to the olden times. Therefore, it is difficult to imagine that the Wathewlama will immediately encounter harm so serious that they will lose contact after successfully liberating the whole family of Harlun.”

“Yeah, that’s true.”

Olba also agreed with King Erzamuha’s view.

“I remember that regardless of main family or branch family, all of them will have secret skills or codes for contacting the Wathewlama, even those methods are ineffective?”

“You even know about this.”

Olba’s question surprised King Erzamuha, but he immediately regained his composure and said,

“Actually that secret skill was lost before I could inherit it from the previous head of the family because of the invasion of Malacoda’s army. It’s regretful, in this war, my Tharja branch nation has been forcefully ‘made younger’. After this, we will have to bow our heads to the other branch nations whom we have yet to build good relations with in order to reinject the techniques or rituals from the previous generation.”

The King Erzamuha who said this had the dignified aura and actual ability as the King. This reliable man who had brown skin unique to the Southern Continent, brown eyes containing a strong will, and a beard, even though he was widely loved by his citizens, what was surprising was that he was still less than twenty years old.

Because of the invasion of the Malacoda army, the previous king passed

away when he was fifty years old. And the elderly officials who were responsible for assisting this young king were also all killed with the invasion of the Malacoda army, this resulted in Tharja's highest ranking official, whether in politics, military or the state organ, being only thirty years old.

“The other branch nations should also have sensed the strange situation with Wathewlama.....it's embarrassing, as every single place wants to gain an advantage in the restoration meeting, they are frantically deepening their relationship with the Wathewlama.”

“So you plan to use us, who are planning to head to the north to chase after Malacoda, as a means to contact the Wathewlama?”

“To be honest, it is like that. Even though the price is a bit subtle, but with regards with the modes of transportation, water and food needed during travel, I will pay for all of it, and not just the Wathewlama, I am going to pay for all the resources needed to cross the Great Otulima Desert.”

King Erzamuha fearlessly rose to Alberto's provocation, and from how he was not paying from the national treasury but his own pocket, it fully showed King Erzamuha's indomitable spirit and honesty.

“I see, to both of our parties, it's considered a good thing.”

Thinking about the future which the young king will face, Alberto showed a wry smile, King Erzamuha also shrugged in response.

Not considering Erzamuha who still had to deal with the other branch nations ruled by old people in the future, Alberto said to the other three people,

“Isn’t this good? We have to pass through Wathewlama to cross the Great Otulima Desert anyway.”

“That’s true.”

“I have no objections~~”

“Your Majesty. Before losing contact, how was Wathewlama’s situation?”

Emilia asked after everyone had made their decision.

“About that, the Wathewlama Warrior Leader Lagides whom Lady Emerada mentioned did say some inauspicious things when the liberation battle ended.”

“Inauspicious things?”

“That’s right.”

King Erzamuha nodded with a stern expression.

““I have to rush back before Wathewlama is swallowed up by the dragon”.....”

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“What does that ‘dragon’ mean?”

After the audience ended, the surrounding temperature started to plummet with the setting of the sun.

Emilia and the others who walked quickly through Tharja City in order to prepare for their journey to Wathewlama City, started to discuss what King Erzamuha said.

“Does it refer to the beasts used by the Demon Army~~or the dragons in the legends around the world~~”

“But that Warrior Leader mentioned that Wathewlama will be swallowed up right? Is there any beast in the world which can swallow up a whole city?”

“I have travelled around the world for a long time, but I have never heard of that kind of beast. Could it be some kind of metaphor?”

Emerada, Alberto and Olba did not seem to be sure about what the word dragon represented.

“If it’s a metaphor, could it refer to some natural phenomenon? A sandstorm for example.”

“Even though it could refer to a natural phenomenon, I don’t think the people of the desert will lose contact because of a sandstorm.”

“I have never been to Wathewlama~~but an oasis city should have a river right~~could it be that the river flooded or something~~?”

“An increase in water in the desert should not be a bad thing, and not matter what, these explanations are a little weak.”

Even if the four of them discussed together, it felt like no conclusion will be reached. Because they expected that the incident which occurred at Wathewlama should have nothing to do with the Demon Army, there was no tension during their discussion.

Considering the words of Warrior Leader Lagides, that situation known as the ‘dragon’, should be something which could be predicted. Since Lagides, the ruler of Wathewlama had predicted it early, Wathewlama should have held national drills or some other countermeasures.

The invasion of Malacoda’s army definitely had an effect on Wathewlama, and considering the number of warrior troops who had been gathered during the Harlun main family liberation battle, it would not be strange to say that the operational decay there was even worse than the Harlun royal family.

“Sigh, anyway, it’s still a good thing to make more preparations, today and tomorrow morning, let’s check once more if we’re lacking anything before setting off. After all, we would need to spend one week on camel to cross the desert. Especially Olba, you’re not young anymore, please don’t get heatstroke and faint like before.”

“Ugh, why are you always mentioning this!”

When they first landed on the Southern Continent, before the bald Olba was able to obtain the headscarf to protect against the high temperature dry climate, he collapsed because his head was exposed to the sun for two days.

Olba’s body which was still hale and hearty for his age, unexpectedly faltering like this would only cause people to feel amused, but because a clear tan line was left on Olba’s shaved head for a long period of time after that, Alberto would mention this for laughs at every opportunity.

“Forget it. But Alberto is right. We should go to the morning market tomorrow to gather some intel as well.”

Emilia resolved the situation with a smile and pulled Alberto and Olba apart.

“Seriously!”

Even though Olba was not truly angry, he still touched the top of his bald head like he remembered something.

“I going out for some peace and quiet!”

Then walked out.

“.....Is he playing along with me and acting dumb? Or is he serious?”

“That’s hard to judge~~”

“Alber, remember to apologise to him later okay.”

Olba, walking in the night city by himself, headed to the organization of the Church on the streets.

Harlun nation was very open to the religions from other countries, and even though it was not on a large scale, a chapel from the Church can still be seen in every town within the country.

Everytime Olba went to a town, he would definitely show his face at the local chapel, but because of Alberto’s joke today, it caused him to become interested in the headscarves at the night market, and when he was browsing, he ended up arriving a little later than the appointed time.

“Lord Olba.”

“Yeah.”

Meeting the priests of other countries and listening to their troubles was one of Olba's important tasks.

But other than that, every time Olba went to the chapel, he would specially maintain contact with certain people.

“How's the situation?”

“.....Thanks to Lady Emilia and the others coming out victorious in successive battles, the restoration activities for the Harlun family and branch families are proceeding very quickly. Because of this wave, the merchant guilds, embassies or believers of the Church in other nations do not show signs of being persecuted or neglected.”

“Hm, I see.”

The clamour of the far away night market was heard, and within the facilities of the Church after turning in from the main road, the one talking to Olba was a shadow like man. The man was wearing dark robes which made it easy to hide in the darkness, and below them, the hem of the robes which proved that he was a Church inquisitor could be vaguely seen.

“At least, as long as the Southern Continent is not freed from the threat of the Demon Army, in order to fight Malacoda's army in the north, they would probably not cause any unnecessary conflict. The joint knight troops from the Western Continent and Northern Continent also understand they need to work together with Lady Emilia in order to defeat the Demon Army in the north. But to be honest, no one knows what will happen after that.”

“The war will only begin after peace is regained? How ironic.”

After Olba responded to the words of the shadow in a scornful manner, he asked suddenly like he thought of something,

“That’s right. With regards to Wathewlama City, do you have any information.”

“You said.....Wathewlama? That warrior nation located in the Great Otulima Desert?”

“Yes. The king of Tharja expressed that he was unable to establish contact with them. It looks like that should be the next destination.”

“I see. I recently.....seemed to have heard some information about Wathewlama.”

The shadow thought for a while, then immediately remembered something.

“Then again.....I seem to have heard that ‘that person’ was sent to Wathewlama.”

“Sent? Who are you talking about?”

“Yes, actually, erhm.....”

The shadow like man suddenly became hesitant in his speech.

“I heard that person was very tired after handling the tasks in the ocean nation Lumvasa.....then, since there was a need to investigate the situation in the north after the liberation battle of Harlun nation, since it was rare for that person to be nearby, that person insisted on heading to that place, erhm.....”

“What’s wrong, make yourself clearer.”

“Y, yes.....”

The shadow like man wiped his sweat under the hood and said determinedly.

“Enforcer Crestia, should be heading to Wathewlama right now.”

“.....What did you say?”

Olba’s eyes widened in surprise.

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“It looks like~~..... there’s nothing~~.....strange at all~~~~.....”

Emerada’s dragged out tone which seemed to be three times longer than usual because of the heat and fatigue, groaned while slumped on the camel’s back.

“Seriously~~.....it’s been five days~~.....since we left Tharja~~.....
whether it’s demons~~or dragons~~nothing has appeared at all~~~~”

“Em, don’t talk. You’ll use up energy.”

“Everyday~~everyday~~we are just facing sand and sky~~~~I think I’m
going to go crazy soon~~~~”

“Bear with it a little longer. The journey has been smoother than expected.”

Olba, riding on the camel in front, pointed to the sand dunes ahead of them.

“Let’s rest a bit after reaching the shade of that sand dune. Emilia! Can you
hear!”

“.....I’m fine.”

Emilia, riding on the last camel, seemed to be tormented badly by this level
of heat.

Even though the sand dune Olba pointed out was comparatively cooler, after
they spent a lot of effort to let make the camels sit down, they were still
covered in sweat.

“I really don’t want to meet demons.....in this state.”

Thirty minutes after entering the shade, with her breathing finally back to normal, Emilia glared at the sky.

“If we fight in this kind of hot weather, I wonder if the holy sword will warp from the heat.”

“Because it’s Evolving Heaven’s Silver, I don’t think that kind of thing will happen.”

Olba said with a laugh, but the weather was so hot that this did not sound like a joke.

“Hey.....don’t die alright?”

“Uuushu~~.....”

Emerada, who had collapsed on the sand, had been groaning since just now.

“Why~~can’t we travel during the cooling nights~~~~”

“Travelling at night uses up more energy than travelling in the day, and even if we rest in the day, the efficiency of energy recovery will not match that of doing it at night, didn’t Em say so yourself?”

“I hate it when other people try to reason with me~~~~”

Even though the words spoken were messed up, they just hated the hot weather. Crossing the desert was like a long journey across the ocean, it was easy for accidents to happen when isolated from external help, so it was necessary to ration food and water, and to Emerada, who had a huge appetite despite her small stature, this was just like a journey to Hell.

“.....Hey, Alber~~can you not emit strange noises~~~~”

At this moment, Emerada said this unhappily to Alberto who was fanning her with the sun blocking cloth.

“Huh? I didn’t say anything?”

“Eh~~? Coud it be the sound of my stomach~~? Since just now it’s been like~~roar~~.”

“Huh?”

“Roar?”

Alberto asked, feeling confused while Olba showed a doubtful expression, as for Emilia, she got up quickly.

“I’m going to survey the surroundings first.”

In order to avoid tripping on the sand, Emilia carefully climbed up the sand dune. Emilia, who started frowning because of the strong sunlight after

leaving the shade, squinted her eyes when she discovered that there was a vague object in the distance.

“W, what is that.....”

A huge black object was crawling on the surface of the desert. Even though it was still some distance away, the huge black object which lifted the sand seemed to be nearing this place.

“Olba! Something is coming!”

Emilia quickly ran down the sand dune, pulled Emerada up and asked everyone to get up.

“Something huge is approaching! It might be dangerous to continue staying here!”

“Something huge?”

“You’ll know once you see it! Anyway, make the camels stand up first and make preparations to run away anytime!”

“Y, yeah, I understand.”

Olba, who got a fright from Emilia’s assertive actions, quickly climbed up the sand dune to get the camels to stand up.

“W, what is that thing?”

When Olba was on the sand dune and saw that thing, that mysterious black object was already very close. It was as if only that place was made from a black liquid as it squirmed, there was a pile of huge, black and formless things bunched together in the desert and was gradually approaching this place.

“.....Is that, some kind of living thing?”

Olba examined that formless object more closely compared to Emiila. It looked like a group of a certain living thing. Certain black animals crawling on the ground were starting to bunch together and moving as one.

Olba took a good look and got a shock after discovering that was some kind of animal.

“Li, Lizard?”

Those things which were grouped together seemed to be a group of medium sized lizards.

The size was bigger than a cat but smaller than a dog. After the lizards of that size gathered in the thousands, it looked like a huge object.

Even though they were not malicious enemies, once they were dragged into this, the camels’ legs might get seriously hurt.

Olba turned and returned to the shade, and after asking everyone to help, they started to take the camels away from the direction where the lizards were heading towards.

One hour passed after that. The four of them and the camels were fortunately not harmed, and the huge group of lizards brushed past them in the desert.

“Such crazy numbers. What is going on?”

Flying up in the sky to observe the situation with the lizards, Alberto’s eyes were shining because he was curious about the rare and mysterious occurrence.

“Who cares about the lizards~~let’s rest a little more~~”

Emerada was abnormally unmotivated.

Emilia watched the sand being kicked up by the lizards who were leaving in the far away distance, then discovered something.

“Could it be.....that the dragon refers to.....”

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Discovering from quite some distance away that the walls of Wathewlama City was already in pieces, and looked like they were going to collapse any

moment, Emilia and the others are initially worried if they had been attacked by the Demon Army.

But the closer they got to the city, they slowly noticed that it was the fault of something which was, in some sense, stranger than the Demon Army.

“A, are those lizards?”

“Eh? What are those things?”

Emilia and Alberto discovered countless black shadows squirming around the desert city Wathewlama and could not help but shout.

Even though the numbers were not as numerous as what was seen just now, these lizards which had obviously deviated from the others were surrounding the desert occupied by the Wathewlama and casually wandering around.

There were probably more than ten thousand of them just around the city walls. To the humans who hated reptiles, this was like a scene from Hell.

In actual fact, when Emerada’s camel came close to stepping on a lizard, she would scream.

“This sucks~~! What is going on~~!”

“Em, are you afraid of lizards?”

“I’m not afraid~~it’s just that there are so many here that it’s gross~~~~”

Emilia looked towards Emerada who had been overreacting in surprise, then discovered that there were two Wathewlama warriors holding spears approaching them on camels near the gates of Wathewlama city.

“Halt! May I know who the few of you are?”

These capable and sturdy men were all wearing beautiful cloth with sun-screening attributes matching the style of desert natives, during the liberation battle of Harlun Nation, Emilia and the others had fought side by side with many of these warriors who were dressed in this manner.

As Emilia expressed that she meant no harm and stopped her camel to avoid stepping on the lizards, she showed the two warriors the letter written personally by King Erzamuha.

“I am the representative of this group, Emilia Justina. Can you allow us to meet with the Warrior Leader Lagides?”

“The seal of Tarja’s King Erzamuha.....I see. We apologise for our rudeness.”

After discerning their identities, even if they were riding on camels, with practiced movements, the warriors still gave them a respectful bow.

“But as you can see, we are facing some trouble now.....even though we

have show everyone the way, it will be quite some time before you can meet with the Warrior Leader, is that alright?”

“Ah, that’s fine, erhm.....”

Emilia looked down at the group of lizards in a troubled manner.

Those were round and fat lizards around fifty centimeters in length. They seemed to have mild temperaments, even if they were gathered at everyone’s feet, they did not bite the legs of the camels or humans.

Their features could still be considered cute, and their movements were slow enough for people to not consider them as dangerous, but these numbers still made others feel a strange sense of danger.

“Then, we will show everyone the way. Is King Erzamuha doing well these days?”

The warriors walked in front, starting to lead the way for Emilia and the others.

Unexpectedly, the warriors were not holding spears, but brooms with long handles. They used this to chase away the lizards which were obstructing the camels.

The lizards which were hit in the face by the broom showed an irritated expression, but still obediently moved out of the way.

Emilia and the others breathed a sigh of relief because they did not have to worry about stepping on the lizards, and even if they lacked knowledge of the desert country, they knew very well that this was an abnormal situation.

“Erhm, about these lizards.....”

Representing all her comrades, Emilia asked this to the warriors leading the way, the warriors gave a wry smile below their sun resistant cloths and said,

“This is a type of lizard known as Dragonicks. A type of species native to the Southern Continent which lives within the whole Great Otulima Desert. Even though they would migrate in groups from the coast on the western side of the desert to the coast in the east, because their appearance looks like that of ancient dragons, Wathewlama have been addressing them as ‘dragons’ since a long time ago.”

“Oh, so that is what the ‘dragon’ from before meant.”

“But.....the number of lizards which gathered this year is abnormally high.”

The warrior spoke as he busily used the broom to chase away the lizards.

“It seems that the lizards living in the northern side of the desert started moving south because of the influence of the Demon Army. Because practically all the lizards in the desert are moving along the same route, all the sand dunes in the places they have passed have all disappeared.

Wathewlama was repeatedly attacked by groups of lizards time and again, and the most recent one finally became like this.”

“S, seriously?”

“It, it’s actually that bad.....”

Looking in the direction the warrior pointed with his broom, Alberto and Olba got a shock.

The city gates ten feet wide and ten centimeters thick were broken. Even if it was said that the front gates of the Warrior nation Wathewlama which had withstood the Demon Army and the ancient wars had been broken by the lizards at their feet which moved slowly and had dim-witted looks on their faces, no one might believe it.

“We successfully liberated Harlun Nation after so much effort, and in the end, the important Wathewlama became like this, in order to avoid Malacoda’s army discovering this opening.....we also have to strictly be wary of our surroundings.”

A dark tone was heard in the warrior’s voice.

Even after crossing the city walls, there were still lizards everywhere in the streets.

Even though they did not attack, all the streets and ground were filled with lizards no matter where they looked.

“Because we do not know where the group of lizards will move to, we cannot just carelessly leave the desert. Even though just one or two lizards move very slowly, but when Dolagnicks are moving in groups, they are as strong as an ancient dragon. Even the city gate and walls were damaged because they could not withstand the vigorous impact. If humans were dragged into it, they will only have the options of being thrown far away or become mincemeat.”

With this, Emilia and the others finally knew why this place lost contact with Harlun Nation.

“H, having so many lizards barge in, it’s amazing that the roads within the city are alright.”

The warrior answered Emilia’s question with a sad voice.

“That is thanks to the efforts put in by that gate which had defended against outside enemies for hundreds of years.”

After saying this, the warrior pointed towards the city gate which had been badly damaged.

“The shock of destroying the city gate caused them to lose their structure, and after that, the last group of lizards which attacked Wathewlama, ended up staying on this piece of land.”

“Ah.....”

The Wathewlama citizens who inherited this piece of land from their ancient ancestors must be very proud of their lives here.

The city and city gates, with gradually reinforcement over the years, carved history together with the citizens.

Once they thought about how this history might be destroyed because of the sudden attack of the lizards, it was impossible for them not to feel saddened by this.

“We were in a lot of danger before too huh~~~~”

Emerada seemed to recall when they encountered a group of Dragonicks a few days ago. The number of lizards in that group at that time was easily more than ten thous.

“As you can see, if another large scale lizard group comes again, the city walls of Wathewlama will be completely destroyed. This year is also the first time we have seen such a huge group of lizards, but from how we have been attacked a few times, I’m afraid that the lizards have already considered the area of Wathewlama as a migration path.”

“““““Eh?”””””

The four of them simultaneously exclaimed in surprise.

“In addition, the lizards who have completed their breeding activites in the

eastern coast will follow their original path in order to return to their original lands. Furthermore, the lizards which were born in the eastern coast will go through a great migration once again to return to the lands of their parents.”

“““““Ah.”””””

Everyone was staring, feeling stunned.

“T, then, if the group of lizards which damaged that wall and gate, pass by again here again when they return.....”

“That’s right. This time it might be the opposite gate which would be broken through, and the interior of the city will be rabaged by the dragon. We don’t know how much the city walls can take, if the power of the dragon does not dissipate after entering the city, this nation and its citizens will sustain serious damage. Everyone who can move right now are repairing the gate and city walls, or have gone out in order to grasp the movements of the groups of lizards, everyone is working hard.”

“.....It’s feels like we are disturbing when all of you are so busy.....”

“No, it’s about time we have contact with Harlun Nation.....”

The conversation between Emilia and the warriors leading the way started to become a little awkward.

“Even though it’s a little rude to be confirming it now, but the name Emilia Justina, could it be referring to the Hero Emilia who led the strike team to attack during the liberation battle of the main nation.....?”

“.....Ah, yes.”

Emilia had a bad feeling. And as if to verify this feeling, the two warriors leading the way started to discuss something in a low volume, then said bitterly,

“Even though we know that it’s very rude of us common citizens to say this when all of you are in a hurry.....”

“.....w, we also have things we can and cannot do.....”

““but can we ask all of you for help in resolving this crisis!””

“.....Also.....things we cannot do.....”

With a blank expression, Emilia accepted the teary request from the strongest warriors in the desert.

A lizard next to her feet stuck out its tongue like it was mocking Emilia.

※

Protect this city from the lizards.

It was easy to say this, but since this was a natural occurrence, Emilia and the others who were citizens from other continents, did not know how the scale of this issue.

Even if they have seen the large group of lizards, it was still difficult to imagine that the lizards at their feet were able to rush and break the city gates.

Emilia and the others who were unable to see Warrior Leader Lagides even when night time came were also able to sense the atmosphere of everyone hoping that they would help.

However, the Wathewlama citizens who have lived here a long time were unable to think of ways to solve this after wracking their brains, so Emilia and the others who have came here for the first time, did not think that they would be able to do anything.

But the situation did not allow them to say so.

To head north from here. In other words, if they wanted to cross the Great Desert to head to the north, they needed the help of the citizens of Wathewlama no matter what.

There was a stretch of land known as the 'Flame Road' on the northern side of the Great Desert, and it was considered especially hot even in the Great Desert, this area which maintained an abnormal weather all year round, if they did not have the help of the citizens of Wathewlama or the people of the northern nations, it would be very difficult to cross that place.

Even Olba who had travelled to various places in the world to spread faith did not know how to cross the Flame Road, so they needed to seek assistance from others no matter what.

However right now was not the situation to ignore the crisis which threatened the survival of Wathewlama and ask for help in their journey, thinking about it in more detail, if Wathewlama, the key node in the Great Desert was destroyed, Malacoda's army might attack Harlun in the south once again.

If Wathewlama really ended up being destroyed, the Harlun nations which had great influence on their surrounding areas yet did not get along with each other, it was easy to imagine what will happen to the relations between them.

If Harlun did not unite, the southern and northern areas of the Southern Continent would not be able to work together.

This commotion was not just the problem of a small border country, but a huge crisis with a strong effect on the future of the whole of the Southern Continent.

Anyway, Emilia and the others could not ignore the troubles faced by Wathewlama to continue their journey north.

“Even so.....what should we do.....do we have to help move the lizards?”

“Move the lizards.....is it~~”

It was the night they entered Wathewlama. Emilia and Emerada who were almost used to it looked at the lizards next to the main streets within the city, and sighed at the same time.

“But~~it should be a task which requires a lot of labour right~~they seem heavy~~”

“That’s true.....”

The average size of adult Dragonicks are about fifty centimeters, and the larger ones can grow to seventy centimeters, and their physique was short and fat, so they should be heavier than what they seem to look like when moving them.

During this time, both of them saw the strong and sturdy Wathewlama warriors using tools like wagons to tiredly move wagonfuls of lizards out of the city with blank looks on their faces.

Faced with this kind of numbers, even if four people made up of Emilia and the others were added, it would be like trying to put out a burning cartload of firewood with a cup of water, and in addition, doing so would not solve the threat brought by the lizards returning here from the breeding grounds.

Even though the night sky of the desert had such a beautiful Milky Way, the ground was flooded with lizards.

Even though it is not as if they could not do it at all, they really did not have any leeway to be able to be immersed in the charm of a foreign country.

“Then again, even though they’re so scary after congregating into groups, why do the lizards here seem so slow.”

“I heard that it’s because~~they become disoriented after losing their structure~~”

“There’s something like that?”

“I’m not sure~~but the people of Wathewlama said it’s like that~~”

Even though Emilia and the others did not have a reason to know this, the Dragonicks which have gathered in large groups have a body function which was able to make the group connect with the magnetic fields of the Earth using their internal organs in order to pinpoint their bearings.

But at the same time, they will become disoriented once the group has been dispersed once, and before they are able to gather enough companions to confirm their bearings, they have a habit of staying where they were.

“But, where would we be able to find enough food and water to keep these lizards alive.”

“The more we think about these animals, the more mysterious they are, how troubling~~”

“We can only hope that Alber and Olba are able to find some clues in the city.”

After confirming that they would be unable to meet up with Warrior Leader Lagides, Alberto and Olba went out to the town first to gather information.

Alberto was replenishing the resources used up when crossing the desert while gathering information.

And according to Olba, even though it was this kind of border country, there seemed to be a chapel of the Church, so he planned to gather information from the local priests.

“I hope that the countermeasures found~~are things we can do~~”

In the end, perhaps the only way would be to use a large amount of people to transport the lizards out of the city. This feeling weighed heavily of both of them.

“I also know very well how strenuous your tasks are.”

“.....Yes.”

A corner of the city. Behind a small chapel next to the city walls, Olba was lecturing with a stern expression on his face.

“Especially since your work performance is stellar, I also rely on you a lot.”

“.....Yes.”

Crouching next to Olba in a gloomy manner was a petite lady dressed in a dark toned robe just like the man who had a secret conversation with Olba in Tharja.

“But unexpectedly, someone like you would actually come to this kind of border because of that kind of reason.....if you, as the top ranked enforcer, is like this, how are we supposed to lead by example?”

“.....I really have nothing to say.”

Even though the lady apologized in a soft voice, her tone still gave the impression that she had not reflected on it at all.

“But, Lord Olba. Please try it once. You would definitely understand if you do!”

“It’ll be bad if I understood! Right now, I don’t want to hear anything about lizards at all!”

Just like the lady, Olba was grabbing his head and crouching down.

“What the heck are you doing! Actually saying that you were unable to forget

the taste of the lizard cuisine you had during your missionary journey? Even though the world is facing a crisis right now, what are you thinking! How many days has it been since you arrived in Wathewlama!”

“Ten.....ten days.”

The unexpectedly long period caused Olba to be momentarily speechless.

“.....That is so regretful. The people stationed at Tharja were also surprised. Even asked me what Bishop Crestia was doing in this kind of place.”

“Sigh.....”

The lady wearing the robes took off her hood.

The lady who tied her beautiful hair with hemp rope and wore a cross necklace of the Church around her neck, Crestia Bell, starting telling her story like she had given up,

“The first time I ate this was not at Wathewlama, but when I was heading to my posting at Harlun Tharja when I was sixteen as a member of the Church Missionaries. Even though most of the people said lizards are evil foods and did not dare to touch it, the members of the inquisition and I had to conduct secret investigations due to our position.....”

The Church did not specially ban the eating of meat, but not just the Dragonicks, the Western Continent did not have a food culture of actively

eating reptiles, so many believers of the Church in the Western Continent probably just thought that Dragonicks cuisine was the food of the devils.

“.....You actually ate it reluctantly, but it was so unexpectedly delicious enough to become a lifetime memory?”

“According the information I gathered in Harlun, the origins of that kind of lizard is here in Wathewlama. Erhm.....because I do not have any urgent tasks on hand, I decided to make a detour to the north.....”

It looks like the lady, on the spur of the moment, crossed the desert a few days earlier than Olba and came to Wathewlama.

Bishop Crestia Bell, was part of the External Missionary Department which Olba had jurisdiction over in the Church, in addition her performance at the Doctrinal Correction Council was also recognized and she was recently promoted as the head enforcer.

Not just the Doctrinal Correction Council, through Olba, many members of the Missionary Department supported the journey of Emilia and the others, but because they did not expect to obtain assistance from them in Wathewlama, so for Olba, for Crestia to stop by in Wathewlama, it was not a completely bad occurrence.

But putting Emilia’s journey aside for the moment, an important subordinate of the Church actually coming here because of a tourist like though of wanting to eat lizard cuisine was something which could not be overlooked after all.

Even though there was some effect of the missionary activities in Harlun, they were still unable to build up a huge base of power like in the Western Continent, just having a small chapel outside the town was considered a rather good situation.

Unexpectedly, the discipline of his subordinates actually started to become lax here, causing Olba to lament this greatly, even though this was not the time to handle this kind of problems.

“.....Sigh, anyway, the lizard cuisine is unimportant. Crestia, you have been staying here since ten days ago right?”

“How can it not be important!”

“When I say it’s not important, it’s not important!”

Crestia rebuked with a stern expression on her face, but Olba rejected her opinion bluntly and continued to speak,

“Crestia Bell, did you witness the Dragonicks attacking Wathewlama City?”

“.....You are correct.”

Crestia explained in detail.

It happened the day Crestia arrived in Wathewlama. At that time, a loud bell sound was heard within the city.

When it was clear that it was an alarm notifying that an emergency had occurred within the city walls, the group of Dragonicks which have passed the city walls have already thrown up clouds of sand, making it easy to imagine how terrifying the scale was.

A few short minutes after that, there was a thunderbolt like sound, the city gate was also damaged. When Crestia came to her sense, the city was already filled with lizards.

“In order to repair the city walls which have already been hit a few times, there were many warriors on the city walls at that time. So there were also people who fell down from the walls because of the impact and were seriously injured. The lizards who rushed in with enough power to break into the city also injured many people and this chapel also took in many injured at that time.”

“Even though it sounds like a joke, the scene, in various ways, must have been like Hell.”

Olba understood once again how terrifying the lizards which slowly passed by the both of them could be, it made him feel afraid, yet he also thought it was laughable.

“Crestia, these things caused such a terrifying incident, with this, do you still want to eat them?”

“No, erhm, with you putting it this way, I also feel very pained.....”

Even if it could not understand what the both of them were saying, the lizard still temporarily stopped moving and stared at both of them with round eyes.

After Olba and Crestia looked back at the lizard with different expressions, the latter nonchalantly left at a slow pace.

At this moment, Olba discovered something.

“That’s right. Since they can be eaten, why isn’t anything catching these lizards and eating them?”

“Isn’t it because there’s too many of them?”

Crestia said,

“The population of Wathewlama is not large. If the Dragonicks meat is prepared in the traditional manner, one adult beast would be able to feed two families on average. If just the close to ten thousand Dragonicks around the city are taken as food, there would be too much surplus.”

“That sounds reasonable. Are they unable to do it even by processing them through smoking or curing to become food which can be preserved for a long time?”

“How about this?”

Crestia placed her hand under her chin and mumbled with a serious expression on her face,

“In the desert, the burning materials needed for smoking are very expensive. When the citizens of Wathewlama eat them, they would normally use the rocks on the roadside which have been heated up significantly by the sun for grilling.....as for traditional cooking, it would be used as ingredients in soup, or sprinkle salt on the leaner meats after stewing the soup and eat it together with cooked yam. Even though the head is seen as a delicacy with rich nutrients, it is said that not all locals can get used to it. Basically, rock salt is a expensive commodity, if it has to be cooked once with adequately prepared portions.....that’s right, some places will soak the whole Dragonicks into alcohol, it’s a wine known as dragon wine.....ah, but the method of making is a secret recipe passed down through oral methods through the Wathewlama Warrior Leaders through the generations, and is a lucky item which is only made during particular seasons, so it can’t be mass produced even if there are a lot of lizards. As for other methods, there is frying the scales and mixing them with the fermented petals of the Lidika flower which grows in all areas of Harlun nation to make a tea which helps with the digestive function of the body, in addition there are the northern nations who have trade relations with the Central Continent, because the culture here has also flowed over, so besides having markets which sell Dragonicks cuisine on a similar scale as cows, pigs and chickens, their export situation has always been quite good as well, but from what we know, under the suppression of Malacoda’s Army, it will be difficult to export the products.....”

“.....What is it about the lizards which caused you to become like this.”

This top inquisitor of the Doctrinal Correctional Council would normally not show any expression when handling all kinds of sacred tasks, this was actually Olba's first time seeing her passionately talking about anything.

If Crestia was left to her own devices, it felt like she would start explaining the versatility and usefulness of lizards as ingredients, their market value and other topics, causing Olba to momentarily lose his motivation.

“Sigh, forget it, anyway, since we have met here, it means that we are on the same boat. If I still wish to know anything else about the lizards, I will come by and ask you about it again. Before we leave this place, remember to keep in contact.”

“I can also introduce the most delicious eateries in Wathewlama to Miss Emilia and the others.”

Even though Olba did not ask about this at all, as he did not want to pay attention to Crestia anymore, he decided to return and meet up with Emilia and the others who were waiting at an inn in the city.

Just as Olba was paying attention to the ground around his feet and passed by the night market which was not very lively because of the lizards, someone suddenly tapped his shoulder from behind.

“Hi, have you gotten anything on your end?”

Looking back, Olba discovered Alberto who was holding some kind of kebab in his hand.

“.....Could that be a Dragonicks kebab?”

“Oh! You know it very well. It’s being sold everywhere. Oh my, I thought it would taste strange, but the taste is unexpectedly good. Sigh, but eating it in a place where their alive comrades are everywhere feels a little strange.”

“Before eating it, I already feel full from listening to the topic of lizard cuisine.”

Olba, after replying with a shrug and preparing to return together with Alberto, suddenly realized something was a little strange.

“Hm? What’s wrong?”

“Nothing.....”

Olba surveyed the ground around in feet in a confused manner. It felt as if he was having no trouble walking forwards.

The Dragonicks which have been coming and going within the night market have suddenly disappeared from around the both of them for unknown reasons. Of course a few of them can be seen far away, but they were not willing to get close to Olba and Alberto at all.

“Alberto! Lend me that kebab!”

“Hm? What is it, you want to eat it after all?”

Olba, who had discovered something, snatched the kebab without waiting for Alberto’s answer, and after moving the kebab to a slightly lower height, he started to walk very quickly.

“H, hey, Olba? What’s wrong? What are you doing?”

The stern priest who had shaved his head, his appearance as he positioned the skewer at his waist and acted strangely, seemed more peculiar than the lizards.

“Could it be, this.....”

However, Olba ignored Alberto, and continued to hold the kebab out, walking around in the night market.

The kebab Alberto bought had sauce made from herbs and spices added to it and was roasted perfectly, emitted a strong appetite inducing smell.

Within the range of smelling that, every single Dragonicks avoided Olba with agile movements.

“H, hey, Olba, this is.....”

Alberto, who seemed to have realized the same thing, looked towards Olba with a serious expression.

After Olba returned the kebab to Alberto, he nodded with the same serious expression and said,

“It looks like we might have found a solution.”

“You want us to eat lizardssss ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh~?”

The screams coming from the inn used to house honoured guests in the Wathewlama city centre contained a sense of revulsion so strong that people were worried if this would damage the already weak city walls.

After hearing that Olba and Alberto found a way to protect Wathewlama from being damaged by the lizards, the two females were filled with expectations, but they did not expect it was to have them eat lizards.”

After seeing the kebab wrapped in plant material in Alberto's hands, Emilia and Emerada's faces turned stony immediately.

“Is, is, is that, lizard meat~~?”

“W, why would we want to eat something like that! Before eating them, don’t we have to kill that lizard and dismember it first?”

“Emilia, you are a daughter of a farming household, don’t tell me you haven’t killed a chicken before?”

Olba slowly approached the Hero and Court Socceress who showed weak reactions, but Emilia looked upwards and shook her head vigorously.

“Don’t lump chickens and that kind of large lizards together! For chickens, all you have to do with twist its neck, cut off the head, pluck their feathers, drain their blood and cut open their stomachs to take out the organs, but I have never dismembered a lizard before, and have never thought about eating them!”

“You’re really strangely strong headed about this.”

Emilia’s difficult to understand rejection, caused Alberto show a wry smile, as for Emerada----

“Uu~~it’s fine if all of you see me as an arrogant noble~~who does not know how the meat I ate looks like when it’s alive~~but I don’t want to see anyone kill chickens~~or know about any of its detailed procedures~~!”

Emilia’s bloody topic caused her to cover her ears once again, her face pale.

“Both of you listen to me. Not only in Wathewlama, in the Southern Continent, lizard cuisine is a common source of protein like cows, pigs and chickens. There is no need to show such adverse rejection to them.”

Olba simply explained the knowledge which he just obtained but would probably never need to use once they leave Wathewlama.

“Of course no one said that all the lizards nearby have to be eaten. Because there is an issue of preservation, so for the tasks of calculating how much to catch and cutting them apart, we will leave them to the experts of Wathewlama. We hope that Emilia and Emerada can help with what comes after.”

“W, what comes after?”

Olba nodded seriously.

“Yeah, which means after removing the scales, cutting them apart and taking out the organs, we want the both of you to use fire spells to grill the meat which is left.”

“I don’t want to!”

“No way!”

Emerada did not even drag out her tone and clearly expressed her rejection.

“Whether you are willing to or not, we have already discussed this with Warrior Leader Lagides.”

“You’re lying?”

“That’s a lie right?”

The two well built men slowly approached the shivering young ladies hugging each other on the bed, with this inappropriate scene composition, the topic continued to develop.

“The lizards will move in order to breed. But for the lizards in the north to come to the south, we can consider it as due to the influence of the Demon Army. In other words, the lizards have some way of detecting danger as well as take evasive action.”

“I, I can understand that~~”

Emerada nodded to Olba’s explanation with a pale complexion, but she still looked like she could not accept it.

“So, we want to capture a large number of lizards at one ago and hold a grilling party. We are going to use a huge fire to grill them as much as possible, letting the smoke and smell spread to the surroundings. Like this, perhaps the lizards will see the region of Wathewlama as a place dangerous to them and avoid this place.”

Alberto helped Olba explain, but even then, Emilia was still unable to accept it.

“A, are you sure it will be effective? In the end, we have to do bloody things to a large number of lizards in the city right? If we do that much and it’s still

not effective, it will make us feel very bad you know? And we will be well known tormenters in the World Lizard History and be forever remembered for this you know?”

“What nonsense are you spouting. Relax, Emilia. We already did many tests on the way back. These guys are very sensitive to the danger of their own kind.”

Even though it was not known what tests Olba and Alberto had conducted, even if the both of them showed the lizard kebab to Emilia, she was unable to feel reassured at all, and even came close to fainting due to anemia.

“Anyway, on national capacity, Wathewlama will compensate the businesses who depend on hunting or cooking Dragonicks for a living. We can freely choose which lizards to grill. But the current Wathewlama does not have sufficient fuel to cook so much meat in one go. In order for the smell and smoke to spread to the level we need it to, we have to cook a lot of meat in one go.”

“Is, is that why you came looking for us~~?”

When Emerada said this, she was already close to crying.

“B, but what do we do with them after grilling so much meat. In this weather, the grilled meat will spoil in a few days. Even though we killed them in order to eat them, if we just let them rot like that, I won’t be able to face my father who has passed away!”

As a girl born in a farming family who treasures food, Emilia tried to put up her last effort of resistance, but one sentence from Alberto cruelly invalidated this.

“Don’t worry.”

Alberto showed a beast like smile and took a bite of the kebab for Emilia to see.

“Every citizen in Wathewlama, will make an effort to eat all of it together.”

[illegible]

The distressed shouts strongest Hero and Soceress echoed in the night of Wathewlama, perhaps getting a bad feeling from this sound, the few lizards outside the city walls slowly disappeared into the horizons of the desert.

“Heavenly Flame Slash Heavenly Flame Slash Heavenly Flame Slash
Heavenly Flame Slash Heavenly Flame Slash Heavenly Flame Slash
Heavenly Flame Slash Heavenly Flame Slash Heavenly Flame Slash!”

Emilia listlessly waved her holy sword in a continuous manner as it reflected the rays of the sun.

“Sorry Sorry Sorry Sorry Sorry Sorry Sorry Sorry Sorry Sorry it smells rather nice.”

As for Emerada, she was using flame spells to heat up the stone tablets used for the grilling and slightly lost to her own appetite.

Olba and Alberto who would naturally not put the two females in charge of the bloody tasks, used flame spells in a different place, carrying out the task of grilling large numbers of Dragonicks.

There are currently more than six thousand Dragonicks within the city, and the ones who were grandly sacrificed on the first day because of Olba and Alberto’s strategy, were the two thousand amongst them.

According to Crestia’s calculations, this would provide thirty six thousand portions of lizard meat which was almost equivalent to the total population of Wathewlama.

This large scale grilling event organized by the whole nation, not just within Wathewlama, even the ambassador group from Tharja branch country who came after Emilia and the others to investigate Wathewlama’s situation were involved as well, and it totally turned into a festival like atmosphere.

The strong warriors who were in charge of preparation and distribution constantly delivered the grilled meat made in bulk by the Hero and the others

to the citizens to enjoy, and when resources allowed, they also cured and smoked the meat as much as possible, trying their best not to waste any piece of meat.

“Ohh! Amazing! As expected of the power of the Hero and her group!”

Warrior Leader Lagides who seemed to be very concerned about the situation of the grilling event as he supervised the repairs of the city walls, nodded in satisfaction after he confirmed that the many Dragonicks outside the city wall were leaving Wathewlama in droves.

As it had been decided from the beginning that the remaining four thousand lizards will be suitably made into grilled meat if this method worked, when Emilia and Emerada found out that they could only leave after everything has ended, they screamed once again.

“Please queue up! There is still a lot of meat! After the event ends today, the raw meat can be taken back as well! Please do not push and crowd around!”

The chapel of the Church had also become one of the distribution points for Dragonicks meat, Crestia Bell who showed a big smile with her identity as a top level inquisitor, distributed the grilled meat to the Wathewlama citizens who came to collect them.

Naturally, because of the perk that she would be given some Dragonicks cuisine for her three meals when she assisted the Church, she was working very hard.

“For everyone who is bringing the raw meat back, please try to use the stove to make cuisine which produces smoke as much as possible! Yes, children can get a share as well, please bring them back directly.”

To the people of the Southern Continent, Dragonicks meat was as popular and on demand as cows, pigs and chickens, so the number of citizens who would want to take the Dragonicks meat home will not decrease any time soon.

※

“I don’t want to come to this country ever again!”

As Emilia, riding on a camel, passed through the city gate of Wathewlama which had already been repaired, she was shouting this in a half crying manner.

Even though saying this in front of the warrior who was going to lead them through the Flame Road was a little inconsiderate, even that warrior could not help but show a wry smile.

The look of the Dragonicks raw meat after the tail, head and limbs were cut off and the scales were removed, and the look of the grilled meat, after being forced to stay at Wathewlama for more than ten days, in a literal manner, both these things have left grilling scars which could not be removed from Emilia’s mind.

Even though they were a small nation, but the effects of the efforts of the

whole nation in conducting food processing on six thousand lizards and organizing the grilling event were finally verified one week after the end of the grilling event.

In the end, the huge group of Dragonicks who have mated and were crossing the Great Desert again were discovered passing by far to the south of Wathewlama, other than Olba and Alberto's strategy causing deep trauma to Emilia and Emerada's spirits, just from this result, it was a huge success.

From Olba's standpoint, even though Crestia Bell who met up with him after the commotion ended had a strangely smug expression on her face, and he could not understand the reason for this, in the end, Olba did get a hint for resolving the issue through her abnormal passion for lizard cuisine, so he could not complain about it.

Being affected by the grilling event, it was not just the warrior who was acting as the guide, even Emilia and the others had the smell of grilled meat on them, and when they occasionally encountered Dragonicks who had gotten lost, the other party would run away like a rabbit.

“Because the entire city has been covered in the smell~~the lizards will no longer go near that place~~I hope everyone in Wathewlama in future~~ will not be troubled because they cannot find any meat~~”

Emerada gave a wry smile as she saw the lizards acting that way.

“Even so, it would be better than the destruction of the country. All the citizens, are really thankful to all of you.”

Even though this sentence said by the guiding warrior was in some sense, a type of redemption, Emilia still swore strongly in her heart that she would avoid stepping into Wathewlama as much as possible.

The night one day after the group left Wathewlama.

“.....! Everyone, please wait here for a bit!”

The guiding warrior stopped his camel at a place near the Flame Road, and lowering his posture, he advanced forward in the desert, then ran back frantically a few minutes later.

“P, please come here for a bit!”

“What is it, did something happen?”

“What is he so flustered about?”

Alberto and Olba jumped off their camels and walked to a sand dune in front of them as they followed the guiding warrior.

““What!””

Then after seeing the scene in front of them, they became dumbfounded.

““Eh?””

Emilia and Emerada who followed behind also got a huge shock after seeing the same thing.

In front of them were countless dried up bodies which looked like demons.

As for why it was said to ‘look like’, it was because these bodies did not seem to have maintained a complete state, so it was impossible to determine their correct appearance when they were still alive.

Within this, they discovered some Malebranche claws which formed the main forces of Malacoda’s Army, or what looked like a large sized demon arm, and even if they were demons, it was difficult to look at them.

“W, what is.....”

“These are demons.....from Malacoda’s Army right? Who did this kind of thing.....”

Just as Emilia sucked in a breath.

On the other side of the sand dune, the five people present clearly saw one animal which they were already sick of seeing within this one week, and it was looking towards them with round eyes.

“Was it done by them.....?”

“How is that possible.....but.....”

“No, but, there are no other possibilities.....”

This was the might of nature.

This sentence flashed through the minds of the five people at the same time.

The strong and sturdy demons of Malacoda’s Army who had trampled on the humans of the Southern Continent were easily taken down by the mighty forces slumbering in the Great Desert of Ente Isla.

This stern truth, caused Hero Emilia, known as the strongest in the world, and the others to shudder.

“These lizards~~are really terrifying~~”

“Even though I don’t plan to pity demons.....these guys probably never expected to be trampled to death by lizards.....”

“.....I better raise the holy tasks evaluation of Crestia Bell a little.....”

Even if it was a hot day, Emerada, Alberto and Olba mumbled to themselves with pale complexions, as for Emilia----

“.....I will definitely not come here a second time.”

she said what she had inwardly swore to herself out loud once again.

The Dragonicks on the other side of the sand dune might have noticed the smell from their end and seeing them quickly turn and disappear, after that, all that was left was sand, sky and heat.

--SHORT STORY 2 END--



Short Story 3: Demon and Hero and High School Girl --A happy new year--



悪魔と勇者と女子高生
-A happy new year-

“Ugh.....how cold!”

Evening of winter in Tokyo, the cold wind which blew down from above and mercilessly attacked the streets, a young man outdoors who got hit directly covered his neck, and trembled like a leaf.

“Demon King-sama, please do your best, we’ll be able to end work in another hour.”

Another lean young man standing next to him, encouraged the young man as he exhaled white breaths.

The black haired young man being addressed as the Demon King, looked at the cheap watch on his frozen left hand, nodded and replied,

“Another hour huh.....I should have worn more if I knew it would be like this.”

Looks like the information of one hour did not reassure him at all.

As if to placate him, the lean young man opened his mouth,

“After we finish work today, it’s fine if you want to buy a jacket or a sweater.”

“This set of clothing is different from its appearance, it’s not warm when worn at all. What kind of Santa Claus costume is like this.”

The two young men were wearing red and white tops with long pants, and were wearing cone shaped hats with two round accessories at the front.

Also known as the ‘Santa Claus costume’.

The costume of the old man from the North pole, even though it had white fur trimming which looked warm, the cloth was actually very thin, and was made from polyester fibre which had poor elasticity.

“It is a seasonal working uniform after all. So it’s made from polyester fibre and is a low quality product which only looks good. Demon King-sama is still alright, at least the clothes still fit you.”

“That’s because Ashiya is so tall. Even if you wear that, you don’t look like Santa Claus at all.”

On the chest of the black haired young man who addressed the lean young man as ‘Ashiya’, there was a simple nameplate with the words ‘Maou’ handwritten on it.

“In actual fact, Santa Claus is a saint from this world right. To us as high ranking demons, this is an existence whom we are incompatible with.”

“It’s not wrong for you to put it that way.”

“Rather than that, we should think about what we should use the money

earned today on. Do we buy more clothes, or do we harden our heart and buy a warmer.”

“High ranking demons really shouldn’t be talking about this. Even if we want to buy a warmer, we need to consider the costs of gas and maintenance..... ah.”

The Santa Claus pair known as Maou and Ashiya, rested their gazes on the figures who are walking in front of them, they squeezed out smiles from their frozen faces and shouted loudly,

“Welcome! Do you need a Christmas cake?”

“We have two kinds of flavours, fruit cake and chocolate cake!”

“Do you want to consider!”

The man wearing a suit ignored both their shouts and did not even look at them.

Under both their gazes, the man passed through the automatic doors next to them and entered the convenience store.

During the short time when the automatic doors opened, commercial background music celebrating Christmas was heard within the store, but it immediately could not be heard anymore.

The two of them with stiff smiles sighed deeply.

“They aren’t selling huh.”

“Yeah.”

A long meeting table covered in a white tablecloth was placed in front of the two people, on this impromptu selling area which had been decorated in a minimal manner, there were a few boxed cakes used to celebrate Christmas.

Outdoors in the depths of winter, the both of them were working to sell the seasonal product of the convenience store----Christmas cakes.

This is a story which occurs on the evening of Christmas Day 25th December, in a certain corner of Tokyo.

※

“What time is it now?”

“Uh, almost 6pm.”

After confirming the time once again after just doing it, Maou frowned.

“.....They won’t be able to sell anymore right? The families who will buy cakes should have bought them already.”

“You’re right.”

Ashiya replied with a serious look on his face.

“The wind is so strong, and I passed by two or three cake stores when I came here.....”

Even though it was not as if the cakes from the convenience store were no good, but compared to speciality cake stores, these will feel mass produced no matter what.

“There is still one hour until the special price timeslot.....true, perhaps we won’t be able to sell any more.”

Ashiya, looking at the clock inside the store through the glass, agreed with this.

Strangely, even though the holy day which should be celebrated----Christmas Day was 25th December, the liveliest time in this country was the night before on the 24th.

It was the same in the business world, it seemed like the cake would start selling at a special price on the day of Christmas, which would be 6pm today.

“And I feel we have already put in a lot of effort. Just today, we have sold 30 cakes.”

Maou looked at the cake boxes left over at the temporary shop.

“Even so, there are still seven left.....how frustrating.”

“I really want to finish selling these as well. Why don’t we buy one too?”

“But the shop manager said that we don’t have to go that far.....”

Ashiya sneaked a glance through the glass at the situation within the store uneasily.

At this moment, the middle aged shop owner, Shop Manager Ken who helped to refer the job this time, was counting money next to the cashier on the counter.

Even though he, of medium size and build, was wearing a normal uniform, he was wearing a hat similar to the both of them, and it felt like he was emitting a sorrow which was hard to describe.

According to the store’s rules, it looked like they had to wear that hat.

Maou looked in the same direction as Ashiya, and adjusted the hat on his head with a complex expression on his face.

“But even I, who joined on short notice, would be able to get some pay, I would feel bad if there are still some left.”

Each branch had their own sales target when it comes to seasonal products, if

they could not achieve it, the employees have to pay out of their own pocket, this was something which was widely known.

Even though the both of them could not do anything about it, it was said that other than the cakes, the kaarage, oden and meat buns have their own sales targets, so even if it's just the cakes which have a higher unit price, the both of them hoped they would be able to decrease the burden of the shop manager who provided this temporary job for them.

“Then again, how did you end up getting acquainted with the shop manager of this convenience store?”

“When I registered with a job agency before, I was sent to this place. So some time back, I asked him to contact me when he starts selling Christmas cakes.”

“Oh. So this is what is known as networking.”

“I should be asking Demon King-sama instead, why don't you have any shifts arranged on Christmas when business is supposed to be good?”

Maou, who was being addressed as Demon King by Ashiya, had another main job.

The location was a large scale fast food store near their apartment, MgRonalds.

“It just happened to be how the shifts were arranged. There are a lot of

working students during winter break, so it was just a coincidence that there were no shifts arranged today.”

“I see. I’m sorry, even though you have a rare break, I still asked you to come out.”

“It’s alright. Thanks to this, we are able to get two person’s share of salary. And because of our postions, we aren’t able to excitedly go out shopping because of Christmas right?”

Maou waved his hand lightly in response to Ashiya who had bowed his head.

“You’re right. During the time the stupid humans are immersed in leisure, us, the Demon Army, are slowly making preparations towards conquering the world, constantly accumulating everyday like this is.....”

“Sigh, but our salary also comes from the money of these stupid humans who are immersed in leisure.”

Maou, like he was tired of it, interrupted Ashiya with a logical argument as he started saying a grand speech.

Ashiya shut up like his fun was spoiled and protested sadly,

“.....Please don’t say things like that.”

“We have to properly face reality.”

“There are nights where one occasionally wants to escape reality.”

“Because it’s Christmas?”

“Exactly because it’s Christmas!”

“Christmas is also part of reality you know.”

Maou and Ashiya repeated the hollow question and answer.

“Right now we do not have the power to fight or return to our original world. Whether it is Demon King Satan whose goal is to conquer the world, or Demon General Alsiel, right now we are just Maou Sadao and Ashiya Shiro who sell cakes.”

The sigh which Maou produced from deep within his heart held a white colour which was not normally associated with the inner souls of demons, and it rose towards the starless evening sky.

Ever since the plan to conquer another human world besides Earth----Ente Isla, and travelling to the foreign world of Japan, half a year had passed.

The Demon King who was reduced to becoming a Japanese young man known as Maou Sadao had never said any demoralizing words.

However, Ashiya actually did things which came close to complaining, and this caused him to lower his head in shame.

“Sigh, but!”

Ashiya, who was suddenly patted on the back by Maou, got a shock.

“A Demon King who sells cakes should be stronger than a girl who sells matches right?”

Maou showed a refreshing smile and looked upwards.

He was probably telling Ashiya not to feel depressed because of unnecessary things.

Ashiya looked towards the cakes which were waiting to be sold with a wry smile.

“As long as these cakes are eaten, will the dreams of our hopes be seen?”

“Even though we won’t die after finishing them, we would probably get scolded by the shop manager.”

“High ranking demons really shouldn’t be talking about this.”

The conversation between the both of them ended.

Demon King Satan and Demon General Alsiel instantly turned back to Maou

Sadao and Ashiya Shiro, and discovered a long haired lady who looked like a salaryperson walking over from the direction of the bus stop.

The lady who looked like she was going to the convenience store, was walking straight here with strong steps.

““Do you need a Christmas cake.....””

The lady, who acted more coldly than the man in the suit just now, disappeared into the convenience store.

“Welcome!”

The voice of the shop manager who sounded like he wanted to sleep was heard just before the automatic door closed.

“.....Welcome.”

“Welcome.....”

Maou and Ashiya said words of greeting which were heard by no one.

“Then again, Demon King-sama.”

“Yeah?”

“Should we buy Mochi?”

“Mochi?”

Ashiya threw out a random topic once again.

“Yes, New Year is coming.”

“I’m alright with that.....but are you planning to do anything during New Year?”

Whether it was in the context of money or the context of working shift arrangements, Maou could not grasp the concept of New Year.

“Japan seems to think that the plan for the whole year depends on New Year. Even though we have been living in poverty these few months after drifting to Japan, in order to have a good year next year, I want to take the chance to boost my spirit.”

Even though it was just buying Mochi, Ashiya had raised such a rather exaggerated reasons. Maou crossed his arms, nodded and said,

“Uh.....that’s true. We don’t have money to buy New Year dishes anyway.”

“Ah, the shop manager said the deadline for order New Year dishes has already ended.”

“So I said I won’t buy them anymore.”

“In addition, they seem to be planning to sell Marukaburi-zushi in February, if you don’t mind, does Demon King-sama want to help sell this together?”

(T/N: Marukaburi-zushi is type of thick rolled sushi, it is said that eating it one day before Spring Equinox will bring good luck.)

“Don’t you feel that you’re strange to be inviting a Demon King to sell Marukaburi-zushi? And talking about next year even though this year has not ended, we’ll be laughed by the ghosts.”

(T/N: Maou is saying a Japanese idiom, it means that things in the future cannot be predicted and saying anymore about it is not beneficial.)

“If there is any rude ghost who dare to laugh at Demon King-sama, I will deal with him.”

“You should just go throw Fukumame.”

(T/N: Fukumame are beans which have been roasted, Japan would normally conduct rituals to scatter Fukumame to chase away ghosts on the day before the Spring Equinox.)

Just as Maou was prevaricating his subordinate who kept inviting him to sell seasonal products----

“Oh, thank you for coming.”

“Thank you for coming.”

The lady who just went in came out from the convenience store.

The two of them stopped chatting and started to target the lady in their final efforts.

“Please consider our Christmas cakes, there is chocolate and strawberry.....”

And then----

“Cake.....”

The lady who had planned to leave suddenly stopped walking.

Seeing the instant curry package peeking out from the plastic bag in the lady’s hand from the corner of his eye, Maou grasped the chance and started to promote the cakes.

“Please consider, these are our cakes which are sold only at Christmas.”

Even though many customers would leave after being on the receiving end of the promotion, the lady luckily looked like she was interested in the products.

“How different are these from the ones in the store?”

“They are basically the same, the sizes come in three sizes, big, medium and small.”

Ashiya also came forward to assist.

“Oh.....”

The lady first swept her gaze over the three types of sizes.

Then she lifted up her hair and scrutinized them carefully.

At this moment, Maou and Ashiya stopped pursuing.

If they promoted too much, it might cause the other party to dismiss the thought.

After a period of suffocating tension----

“.....It’s fine to buy one occasionally.”

The lady’s rather well shaped lips produced a happy conclusion, Maou and Ashiya smiled naturally.

“Please give me a small chocolate cake.”

The lady said as she took out her wallet.

““Thank you for your patronage! The total is 1200 yen!”

Maou and Ashiya said in unison, they carefully placed the cake into a bag and passed it to the other party and accepted the exact amount of 1200 yen.

The female customer exhaled a white breath, smiled and nodded.

Then she said something unexpected.

“Thank you. Merry Christmas.”

The both of them were momentarily stunned.

The lady did not seem to expect an answer, and turned around and left quickly without waiting for their reply.

.....Thank you.....”

“M, merry Christmas.....”

Even if they could not catch up to the sound of the footsteps which gradually went further way, Maou and Ashiya still could not help but murmur this.

“.....We sold one.”

“Looks ilke struggling for a bit was the right thing to do.”

“.....Could it be that there will still be a chance to sell them even after 6pm?”

“That would be hard to say.”

Ashiya could not agree immediately.

Firstly, the both of them only worked until 6pm.

“No, there will be people like that working lady who would go to work like normal, so there should still be people who will be going home later! Let’s put in some more effort! Which stop is the closest one to here?”

But that customer just now seemed to have ignited Maou’s motivation.

Ashiya tried to recall----

“It’s Eifuku station.”

And then said the name of the Express Train station on the Keio Inokashira line which was three train stops away from their apartment.

“Alright, then we will work hard until the last train today!”

“Demon King-sama, this is not something we can decide on our own. We

have to depend on the shop manager's decision. And if we work until the last train, we won't be able to go home."

"That's true! Alright, then in order to sell all these cakes, I'll go and ask if we can try until the very last minute where we can barely make it home. Shop manager!"

Maou rushed into the store in an energetic manner.

Even though being motivated was a good thing, it's a difficult task to continue staying under this cold sky without knowing when you could get off work.

Maou and Ashiya stayed in the wooden apartment Villa Rosa Sasazuka which was a five minutes walk away from Keio line Sasazuka station, Ashiya thought about the route home and exhaled a white sigh.

※

"Ah, how cold. I hope it would not snow tomorrow."

The lady who spoke in a tired voice, locked the door to her own apartment.

After putting the instant curry which she planned to eat for dinner and the cake inside its box which she bought on the spur of the moment on the table, she took off her jacket.

“After putting it at home, even if it is the smallest size, it still looks rather big.....sigh, it doesn’t need to be finished today anyway.”

Even though it feels like she should develop a habit of cooking her meals, it was still difficult to do, after all even instant food tasted a lot more delicious than what she had eaten before, so after the lady gets off work, she would still go to the convenience store subconsciously to buy them.

She felt that she had no crisis awareness.

After quickly settling her dinner, and brewing red tea with a tea bag, the lady took out the cake from the box and without even cutting it into slices, she ate it directly with a fork.

“Hm, delicious.”

Even though she was not used to eating cakes, in her past life, she did not have an environment where she could freely buy desserts on her own.

In other words, no matter what she ate, it all tasted delicious to her.

“1200 yen huh.....I wonder how much it would cost over there.”

She looked at the cake which she ate about halfway in a distracted manner and her thoughts drifted to her faraway hometown.

When she put her life on the line, holding her sword and fighting large hoards of demons, she had never thought she would end up like this.

“Rika was right. Because everyone else is excited, being alone would feel bitter.”

The savior Hero Emilia Justina of the Holy Cross Continent Ente Isla, after mumbling these words as the Japanese Yusa Emi, wrapped the remaining cake in cling flim and kept it into the fridge.

※

“Everywhere is filled with the atmosphere of the New Year already.”

“That’s right. Even though I think this every year, everyone’s mood changes too quickly, so I don’t feel it at all.”

The day after Christmas, which would be 26th December.

The Christmas atmosphere last night was like an illusion, the Santa Clauses, reindeers and Christmas trees disappeared, and replacing them in filling the street were kadomatsu, tsuru kame decorations and posters promoting New Year deals.

(T/N: Kadomatsu is a traditional Japanese decoration of the New Year placed in pairs in front of homes to welcome ancestral spirits of the harvest. Tsuru

(Crane) and Kame (turtle) are symbols of longevity and bearers of good fortune.)

It was currently evening, the time to leave work.

Yusa Emi and her colleague and friend Suzuki Rika were drinking tea together after leaving work.

Emi looked out from the window of the café at the streets of Shinjuku which became involved in the year end sales battle and showed a wry smile.

“Even though I still have leftover Christmas cake in my fridge at home.”

“My house as well.....a whole cake it still pretty big even at the smallest size. It shouldn’t spoil that easily right.”

Emi only discovered this after eating it halfway, to finish the cake which she bought from the convenience store by herself before the best before date was a rather difficult thing to do.

“With the current season, it should be fine as long as it’s place inside the fridge right.....ah! But it still has to be finished by today.”

“Eh? Why?”

“Uh, because it’s the end of the year? It’ll be bad if I don’t go back to my hometown.”

Emi thought back to the work shift schedule.

“Ah, so your shifts were only arranged until today.”

“Yeah.....that’s right. How about Emi?”

After Rika nodded in a vague manner, she asked this.

“I have shifts until the 31st. After the New Year, it will start on the 3rd.”

Emi replied nonchalantly.

“Uwah, you’re working so hard. Isn’t Emi going back home?”

“Hm.....yeah.”

Even though she would not be able to do so even if she wanted to, saying this out will not help things at all.

Rika looked like she also did not plan to mention her hometown, and a strange silence descended between the both of them.

At this moment, the telephone in the café rang, and the both of them watched the employee run towards the counter.

As they were working in call customer service for mobile phones in a company related to the phone manufacturer Docodemo, Emi and Rika could not help but react to telephones and their gaze also followed the back of the employee on reflex.

Rika, who discovered that it was a nearby company calling for delivery, raised her head like she thought of something and said,

“But, don’t you feel that the calls today have decreased? I had thought that the work of call customer service agents would be the busiest before and after New Year.”

“It should mainly be because the companies have all stopped work for the holidays. And I have heard from other people that there will be a lot of complaint calls on the first three days of the New Year.”

A shadow suddenly appeared over Rika’s expression.

“Ah, right. It’s that, communication malfunction.”

“That’s because everyone will send that ‘New Year Greeting Message’ thing at the same time right? But isn’t there something called a New Year Card which allows people to exchange greetings during the beginning of the year? Why do they still have to specially send messages?”

“Eh? New Year what?”

Emi became flustered because of Rika's question.

“Ah, uh, erhm, New Year Greeting card?”

Rika did not feel suspicious at the term Emi used after some correction, shrugged and replied,

“Very few people will send New Year Greeting cards now. After all, sending a message is much easier, I also did not send any this year.”

“Eh?”

“Eh?”

“Based on what you said, the people who want to send it have done it already?”

Emi got a huge shock.

Even though she did not have many friends, she still wanted to send New Year Greeting cards to the people who had looked out for her.

The communication system of this country was much more complete than her hometown, as long as it was not the remote islands, letters or packages can be sent anywhere in Japan within two days.

So Emi, who had planned to challenge sending New Year Greeting cards around the 30th, was stunned after hearing Rika's words.

“Wasn't it said in the post office advertisements? If you want them to arrive exactly on the 1st, they have to be sent before the 25th!”

“I, I see.....”

“Eh? Are you the type who never cared about these kind of things?”

“.....It's more like I don't know about it at all. Sending them today would be too late. I had wanted to send one to Rika.”

“It's useless even if you say it to me. If you want to send one no matter what, then give it to me directly after the New Year.”

After the both of them left the café, they flinched because the night cold.

“Even though I really want to say why don't we directly go for dinner together.....sorry, I still have Christmas cake waiting for me at home.”

Rika said regretfully, Emi also nodded in response.

“Me as well. There's really no sentiment at all.”

“Oh my, you’re looking down on me too much, actually thinking that only a cake will be waiting for me!”

Rika smiled proudly.

“I still have a half eaten roasted chicken at home!”

Emi, who had already expected this kind of answer, did not specially react in any way.

“Will you be able to finish it before going back to your hometown?”

“Don’t worry! Besides these things, I only have soy sauce and wasabi paste at home, these things won’t spoil even if I leave them over New Year!”

The both of them chatted about topics which totally had no sentimental value and reached Shinjuku station not long after.

After this, Emi will be taking the Keio line. Rika will be taking the Yamanote line to go home.

“Then, see you next year! Happy New Year!”

December will be reaching an end, the crowds moved quickly.

Rika, involved in the year end surge, said this quickly, and Emi replied after a short while,

“Ah, yeah, please take care of me next year too! Be careful on your way home!”

“Got it!”

Even though Emi’s voice was barely transmitted, Rika’s figure was immediately swallowed up by the crowd.

Emi put down the hand which she had raised slightly, and while being careful not to be pushed by the crowds, she mumbled softly,

“Happy New Year huh.....compared to the days where life threatening danger could occur anytime, this feels like a joke.”

When fighting with the Demon Army led by Demon King Satan, it was possible to die anytime.

In reality, she had sustained serious injuries which brought her to the brink of death.

Because she could not believe that her past self which lived those kind of days and her current self were the same person, Emi would occasionally feel uneasy.

Was it really alright for her to be like this now?

Emi, no, Hero Emilia Justina of the Holy Cross Continent, in the final battle in the Demon Fortress, drifted to this country in order to chase after the escaping Demon King.

Her daily goal was to fight the Demon King who had drifted to this foreign world called Japan, a place without any comrades or people from her hometown.

The Demon King and herself seemed to have teleported using the 'gate' at the same time.

Even though that 'gate' was not controlled by Emi's power, she felt that she had successfully chased after the Demon King's tracks, and since she had drifted to Tokyo, then the Demon King should be nearby.

Even in the case where he was not in Tokyo, as long as the Demon King took action, whether the location was Hokkaido or Okinawa, Emi had sufficient savings and energy to go to that place by herself.

Anyway, she just had to bear with it right now.

Emi got on the Rapid train which stopped at the second platform on the Keio line, Shinjuku station.

Even though she would normally take the Special Express train or the Semi-

special Express train to go home, at this time, it would be faster to take this train.

There was the peak period to go home, so it was very cramped inside the train.

Emi never planned to find a seat.

After managing to find a free grip ring, and tolerating the pushing from the commuters behind her while waiting for the train to set off, the train started moving off not long after.

The platform of Keio line Shinjuku station was underground, after moving for two minutes underground, it will move to ground level when it was about to reach the next stop Sasazuka.

Emi looked out of the window distractedly, the lights within the tunnel passed in front of her eyes at a constant speed.

“This train will be making an emergency stop! All standing customers, please.....”

A broadcast was suddenly heard within the train, and before the announcement ended, the train suddenly activated its emergency brakes.

The unexpectedly emergency brake, caused everyone within the train to be pulled in the direction the train was heading towards, Emi also almost lost her balance.

Like this, the train stopped within the tunnel, from the train broadcast which had not been turned off, various equipment sounds were heard from the driver's seat.

“.....Uh, attention all passengers. Earlier.....”

What was deduced as the voice of the train captain, paused after saying 'Earlier'.

The sounds of an intercom were heard behind the train captain, it was probably confirming the reason for the emergency brake.

“Uh, earlier, we received a signal for an emergency stop. Because the train at Meidaimae station has stopped, this train had stopped on short notice, uh.....”

The train captain seemed to listening to the intercom once again.

Around Emi, there were young people who pulled off their earphones, people who suddenly took out their mobile phones, and people who were unshaken and continued to read the newspaper in their hands, there were various reactions.

But on the faces of everyone who reaction, one kind of emotion could be seen.

It had to be at this time, how troublesome.

If an incident happens to a Special Express train station near Shinjuku during the peak period of going home, then the trains after that would all be affected no matter which direction they were travelling in.

With this, the Express train could be changed to stop at each station, or have the commuters get off the train before reaching their destination, in the worse case scenario, the commuters will have to temporarily stay in the cramped train.

The train Emi was in was still within the tunnel, and her mobile phone cannot receive any signal.

Even though the people of this country would not descend into panic or complain just because of the train stopping, when the mobile phone cannot be used to kill time, the feelings of dissatisfaction will surface quicker.

Not only was the train cramped, the warmer was turned on high settings, so it became because stuffy a few minutes after the train moved.

Five minutes after the train stopped, the train captain repeated his apologies and the reason for the train not moving over the train broadcast system.

And at this moment.

“Erhm.....”

Emi who heard a voice next to her, looked in that direction on reflex.

She had thought someone was calling her, but it did not seem like it.

Two high school girls in uniform were sitting in front of Emi, and the one who spoke was one of them.

For the two high school girls, one had a bob cut, while one had tied two small ponytails with ribbons, they were looking at someone standing next to Emi.

The high school girl with ribbons got up slightly within the cramped train.

“Please sit here.”

Did something happen?

Emi looked next to her, there was an old lady who was shorter than Emi and holding the grip ring with her head bowed.

The old lady looked up because of the high school girl with the ribbons. With this, Emi noticed that even without considering the illumination within the train, the complexion of the old lady was abnormally pale.

Probably the stuffy environment within the train caused the old lady to feel uncomfortable.

“Ah, but.....”

However, the old lady looked like she planned to reject the suggestion of the high school girl.

Emi also had a few similar experiences, when she gave up her seat to elderly people, half of her attempts will be rejected.

Perhaps it was because the destination was close, or they planned to stand in the first place, even though the person who was offered the seat normally had complex reservations or other reasons, but seriously, after the person who wished to give up their seat was rejected, it would feel awkward to sit back down.

“Please don’t worry, I’m getting off at the next stop Sasazuka station.”

Seeming to notice the old lady’s concern, the high school girl with the ribbons added this on, but even so, the old lady was still hesitant.

“I’m not going to take such a long journey as well.....”

The old lady mumbled some reasons for rejection and planned to reject the good intentions of the high school girl.

The high school girl, feeling troubled, exchanged glances with her friend next to her.

At this moment,

“Obaa-san, since the young person already said it, you should sit down. You really look very unwell.”

A middle aged man standing opposite Emi with the old lady in between them spoke up to advise the old lady.

Emi, who sensed that the old lady was still hesitant, also spoke on reflex,

“The train doesn’t look like it’s going to move anytime soon, even if you’re going to get off after a few stops, it would be better to sit down.”

“.....”

The old lady glanced at Emi and the middle aged salaryman on her left and right.

“.....Excuse me.”

After saying this, she slowly sat on the seat which the high school girl with ribbons had given up.

“Obaa-san, are you alright?”

The bob cut high school girl, grabbed the hand of the old lady and helped her sit down.

“Thank you.”

The old lady said in a voice which everyone could hear, she took out a handkerchief from her bag to cover her mouth, and leaned forward slightly.

It looked like she was really unwell.

“I’m sorry, thank you everyone.”

The high school girl with ribbons thanked Emi and the salaryman softly, then stood in the place where the old lady had stood.

“Obaa-san, are you alright? Which stop are you alighting at?”

The other girl on the seats rubbed the old lady’s back and asked this.

“.....Eifuku.....”

Emi’s eyes widened, the two high school girls looked at each other in a troubled manner once again.

The girl with ribbons seemed to be getting off at the next stop Sasazuka, the other girl was probably unable to accompany the old lady in transferring trains.

To go to Eifuku, there was a need to transfer to other lines at Meidaimae station.

“I’m going to take the train to Eifuku.”

Since she was already involved, at this point she could not just stand by and watch.

Emi did not think too much about it and said this to the girl with ribbons.

“.....Can I trouble you for this?”

“Yeah, as long as it’s within my ability.”

The other party was not someone with a serious illness, so she could not meddle too much as well.

After Emi said this with some reservations----

“Kao-chan, this onee-san said.....”

“I see, that’s great.”

In order to avoid the old lady feeling overly concerned about this, after the two of them discussed this softly, they glanced at Emi to express their thanks.

Emi shook her head lightly, and the conversation ended like this.

“I’m sorry to keep everyone waiting, the train will move off now, all commuters please be careful.”

Just on time, the train started to move slowly.

Finally driving out to the surface, the train captain started to explain the method of transferring trains, the adjustment in train schedule, and----

“It is due to some commuters getting into a conflict inside the train.”

This was a reason for an emergency stop which would make anyone feel ‘Seriously, causing trouble for others!’

“Sasa, your bag.”

When approaching Sasazuka station, the two high school girls prepared to get off the train.

When the girl with ribbons gave up her seat, the girl with the bob cut had helped her take care of her bag.

After the girl with the bob cut returned the things back to their owner, she exchanged glances with Emi.

After Emi nodded, she changed places with her and sat on the seat.

After the both of them bowed lightly to Emi, and disappeared into the wave of commuters getting off at Sasazuka station.

Emi turned and looked outside through the windows behind the seats, and discovered that the girl with the bob cut was on the opposite platform preparing to transfer to the train stopping there, as for the girl with ribbons, she was walking towards the stairs while paying attention in this direction.

After the train spent double the normal time taken to reach Meidaimae, Emi accompanied the old lady off the train.

Emi turned around and looked inside the train, and saw that salaryman naturally taking the seat which Emi and the others were at.

Even though he looked like he was not paying attention to this place after saying that last sentence, Emi felt that the instant the doors closed, she had met his eyes.

The old lady seemed to have regained her spirits after breathing fresh air, she repeatedly thanked Emi, then the both of them said goodbye at Eifuku station.

“It looks like at least.....”

After saying goodbye to the old lady, on her way home, Emi started recalling what had happened in the past twenty to thirty minutes.

The two high school girls and the salaryman, had been worried for the old lady who was a stranger, it was a time which would bring some warmth to her heart.

“the influence of the Demon King.....had not affected Tokyo.”

Because she experienced the warmth of humans in a small commotion which occurred at the end of the year, Emi walked on the route home in winter with slightly excited feelings.

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Walking out of the ticket gate of Sasazuka station, and crossing the main road underneath the bridge, a message was received on the girl's mobile phone.

“I kept watching until the train set off, that onee-san seems to really be accompanying that obaa-san to change trains.”

Seeing the message sent by her friend Tokairin Kaori, the high school girl with ribbons, Sasaki Chiho, smiled happily.

At the beginning, she was worried that she was meddling, but thanks to the salaryman and the older sister office lady, she finally successfully gave up the seat to the old lady.

Even though it might be self-satisfaction, Chiho believed that it was the correct decision.

“I see, that’s great.”

Chiho stopped walking and leaned against the wall, replying with a short message.

Then Kaori replied immediately.

“Thanks for accompanying me to buy things today. That’s right, Sasa, will you have time after the New Year? Do you want to go for a New Year shrine visit together?”

“New Year shrine visit huh.”

Even though it was a bit too early to think about it when Christmas had just ended, then again, a new year was approaching.

It was almost one year since she entered Sasahata High School to study.

Even though she had thought that there was no need to think about the future for the time being when she got into high school, it looked like the days of being troubled over university examinations will begin soon.

“I have no plans yet. We should hang out somewhere.”

Chiho operated the mobile phone to reply with practiced movements while walking to the supermarket in front of the station to take care of the things her mother asked her to buy on the way home.

※

“Kao-chan! Kao-chan, where are you?”

Chiho tried shouting, but she still could not find the friend whom she got separated from.

After all, there were so many people here that even staying in one spot was very difficult.

Just as Chiho spun around just like a leaf which had dropped into a river to find Kaori----

“Sasa! In front! In front!”

She finally heard someone reply.

Without knowing how she was able to get so far ahead, Kaori walked backwards while waving to Chiho.

“I found you! I’m coming over now!”

“Alright~ uwah!”

Kaori, who was walking backwards, seemed to have fallen, she just saw the girl lose her balance and let out an abnormal sound.

Just before Chiho thought ‘danger’-----

“Please be mindful of danger, and move forward slowly by cooperating with the team!”

Instructions played from the broadcast system was heard from outside the crowd of humans.

Chiho looked towards the broadcasting equipment and discovered a policeman on higher ground carefully observing the huge crowd around him.

Even though it was New Year, it was so difficult.

Chiho thought this to herself, and because of her moment of carelessness, she was almost pushed over by the tourists behind her.

Chiho moved forward carefully, and met up with Kaori who had been pushed to the front three minutes later.

“Sasa, I finally found you, these numbers are really crazy.”

Chiho nodded in response to Kaori’s excited comment.

“But we are one of them as well.

“Sigh~I wonder when we would be able to say our prayers, the front can’t be seen at all?”

New Year, 1st January.

On a clear day suitable for the opening of the year, on the road leading to the Ōmiya Hachiman Shrine in Tokyo, Suginami district, it was filled with crowds who came to visit.

After arranging with Kaori last year to go for a New Year shrine visit, feeling that it was a rare chance, Chiho wanted to go to a bigger shrine, her goal at the beginning had been Meiji shrine.

However, when she told this to her parents.

“It’s going to be super crowded there.”

Her father Senichi, a policeman, said this with a frown.

“I dislike being in charge of the security near the shrines during New Year the most.”

“If you want to go, I won’t stop you, but in such a large crowd of people, do you think the gods would be able to hear your wish?”

Her mother Riho also said this, causing a complex shadow to be cast on Chiho's journey for a shrine visit.

In the past, Chiho had only been to the shrine near her own house, or the shrine very close to her parent's hometown.

So after she called again to discuss this with Kaori----

“How about going to Ōmiya Hachiman?”

she got the name of a shrine which she was not that familiar with.

“We're going to Saitama?”

“Not that Ōmiya! I'm talking about Suginami Ōmiya Hachiman Shrine, it's a large shrine at Eifuku. They seem to be holding an offering archery event too.”

“Oh.”

Chiho and Kaori were participating in the archery club in school.

So she became interested in the archery event held as a sacred ritual.

“Then let's go there.”

“Alright. Then let’s meet up at the transfer station of Meidaimae. Sigh, even though it’s a large shrine, it’s not well known nationally, so it shouldn’t be too crowded.”

Chiho and Kaori recalled the things they chatted about before the year ended.

As a result, it was not about being crowded or not. There were already policemen standing at Eifuku station to direct people to the road to the shrine, and the further they went, the crowds increased.

In addition, not only was the shopping street on the road to the shrine very narrow, because the first New Year sale was abnormally busy, she spent a lot of time to reach the shrine.

Not just that.

“.....It’s tomorrow!”

“Uwah.....”

The both of them passed through the road to the shrine with much difficulty, entering the grounds of the shrine, but what awaited them was the cruel truth.

One of their main goals, the offering archery event ‘Ogasawara-ryu, Hikime no Gi, Daitekishiki’, was being held on 2nd January.

(T/N: Hikime refers to the whistling arrow, Daiteki refers to the large target)

“Sasa, I’m sorry! It would have been fine if I had researched it properly!”

Kaori placed her palms together and kept apologizing.

“It can’t be helped, and I didn’t confirm this as well, if so, why don’t we come back tomorrow.....ah, look, there’s also a Tenman-gū over there, since we’re here already, why don’t we go there next?”

“Y, yeah.....sigh.....screwing up like that at the start of the new year.....”

Even though Chiho really was not bothered by it at all, at the inviter, Kaori had not seemed to have gotten over it.

Even though it was a New Year shrine visit on a clear day, Kaori, following the crowd, still slowly walked towards the main hall in a depressed manner.

Chiho patted Kaori on the shoulder like she was trying to cheer Kaori up and said,

“Kao-chan, do you want to go buy stuff together later? Perhaps the first sale of the New Year might be interesting?”

“Yeah, sure, but.....”

Kaori suddenly turned back and looked towards the road which they finished walking through after a lot of effort.

“It’ll be cramped no matter where we go. Even if we go to Harajuku or Shinjuku, those places will have a lot of shrines we have originally thought of going to.”

“I, I see. There is that possibility.”

The morning MHK news did broadcast images of the main shrines within the city.

Once she thought of those crowds, Chiho discovered that her suggestion was lacking in consideration.

But of course, Kaori would not have missed the fact that Chiho was actually encouraging her.

If she caused Chiho to be depressed as well, then it would really be a waste of effort, so Kaori nodded forcefully to change her mood.

“Yeah, but I’m sorry okay. Instead of show a glum expression, it’ll be better to run and shop to let out those feelings. Anyway, let’s finish our itinerary here, then look for a place for tea.”

“Yeah, let’s do that.”

After smiling wryly at each other, with the pushing of the crowd, before they knew it, the both of them had reached the area in front of the main hall.

“If we don’t settle it quickly, it feels like we’re going to be squashed by the people behind.”

What Kaori said was not an exaggeration at all.

The both of them took out their purses, fished into their small change pouch and took out some coins.

“Kao-chan is throwing in five yen?”

“Eh? Yeah, how about Sasa?”

“Hm~forty yen I guess.”

“What kind of strange number is that.”

“Yeah~~I heard this from my father’s hometown.....”

It was often said that five yen represents ‘fate’, but after changing it to ten yen, it would become ‘very fated’.

For twenty yen, because there are two ‘tens’, it would be ‘extremely fated’.

Next it jumped to forty yen for unknown reason, this one seems to be ‘always fated’.

(T/N: In Japanese, five yen has the same pronouciation as fate, and one of pronouciations of forty is the same as always)

“Even though I don’t really understand it, it’s just about the mood in the end, so there’s not much difference?”

“Is that so? Then.....ah!”

Chiho, who accepted Kaori’s explanation, took out exactly four ten yen coins.

However, at this moment, a man who happened to push forward from behind knocked into Chiho’s arm, and it was too late when she noticed, Chiho’s four coins had fell to her feet.

“Ah, s, sorry.”

The man seemed to be noticed that he caused Chiho to drop her coins and frantically chased after Chiho’s small change.

Delaying after being temporarily in front of the group, this kind of trouble which Japanese would want to avoid, not only Chiho, the man also looked very frantic.

The black haired man who looked slightly older than Chiho opened his mouth,

“I’m really sorry.”

“It’s fine.....thank you.”

However, the coins he passed Chiho----

“E, eh?”

there were actually five of them.

Chiho dropped four 10 yen coins, but she had an extra five yen coin in her hands.

“It increased.....e, erhm.....eh?”

Was it dropped by someone else, or did the money belong to the man? Just as Chiho was troubled over what to do with the 5 yen which did not belong to her, the figure of the black haired man had already disappeared into the crowd.

“Sasa, what’s wrong?”

“Ah, hm, erhm.....”

Chiho hesitated for a bit.

It was only five yen, even though it was just five yen. But it was not money which Chiho should take.

And this was within the ground of a sacred shrine as well.

Chiho seriously thought about what she should do with this five yen which did not belong to her.

And after troubling over it----

“.....Yosh!”

Chiho decided to throw the five yen together with her own forty yen into the offering coin box.

Since it was extra money received in front of the offering coin box, it was highly possible that it was the money the man just now had planned to throw in.

Chiho, who had already delayed for quite a while, quickly put her palms together.

She prayed in her heart “I hope the owner of the five yen can also receive blessings’.

Kaori asked Chiho, who successfully completed her prayers and got away from the crowd, the reason for her delay.

Just as Chiho replied that she dropped her change because she was bumped by someone behind her and the change she got back had increased----

“Your change is strangely more than others, wouldn’t the gods think that you’re greedy?”

“I wasn’t being greedy.”

Even though the gods should not be biased against someone because of the amount of money, Chiho still frowned momentarily because she felt it sounded inauspicious.

“But, it should be a good thing in the end right?”

“Eh?”

“Because Sasa honestly treated that five yen as offering money in front of the gods, and based on the explanation just now, this amount is also ‘always fated’.

(T/N: The Japanese pronouciation of 45 yen and always fated are probably similar.)

That made sense as well.

Even though it was a little forced, it also felt like an answer which was the most acceptable, so Chiho lightly put her palms together while facing the main hall.

“Then, what wish did Sasa make?”

Chiho put down her hands, shrugged and answered Kaori’s question.

“I also.....”

Chiho, who experienced what felt like a disconcerting shrine visit after the whole thing was over, she turned to look at the main hall far away and said,

“helped pray for that person who dropped the five yen, and I hoped that this year would be a peaceful and happy year.”

And she was laughed at by Kaori for acting like an old person.

※

“Sasa, let’s draw fortunes!”

Kaori, who became energetic after leaving the queues, rushed towards the crowd around the fortune sticks.

After waiting for Chiho to catch up, Kaori immediately put in a hundred yen and drew a fortune.

“.....”

However, her expression did not seem that happy.

“What’s wrong?”

“It’s a boring fortune.”

The piece of paper Kaori handed Chiho, was a ‘Good luck’ which no one could comment on.

Even though it felt like there would be retribution by saying the results of the fortune were boring, compared to ‘Good luck’, getting ‘Bad luck’ would enliven the atmosphere better.

“I’m going to tie it up and draw again.”

(T/N: Japanese have a habit of tying drawn fortunes onto the branches within the shrine premises.)

Because it felt like rebuking ‘this can be done again as well’ would be too much of a wet blanket, so Chiho also took out a hundred yen and drew her own fortune.

“Demon King-sama, even though it’s called Divination Fortunes, they are just pieces of paper mass printed by printers, you won’t get any blessings at all.....”

“You don’t understand! This is all about feeling! If you can say that this is

really meaningless, then you can also say that the gods will die from overwork by listening to so many peoples' wishes one at a time, or if everyone's wishes came true, the world will descend into chaos! This has nothing to do with reality at all!"

"Let me tell you....."

Maou and Ashiya were having a meaningless debate in front of the fortune sticks.

"Getting 'Good luck' will make you feel good because you feel lucky, getting 'bad luck' will make you wary and work hard, drawing fortunes is that kind of thing. What's wrong with drawing fortunes once! And it was you who said first that you want to use the New Year shrine visit to mark the start of the new year."

With Maou saying this, Ashiya was unable to rebuke.

Because they received a job at Eifuku which paid rather well at the end of the year, they wanted to come to this shrine which was highly rated in terms of good fortune to pray that they would get a lucky new year.

And in Ashiya's heart, he also did not think that he, as a demon, was truly praying to the gods.

However, his master the Demon King, actually developed interest in the divination fortunes inspired by the gods, and was determined to spend a valuable hundred yen to draw one fortune.

“I suddenly dropped someone else’s money and lost my own five yen at the beginning of the year. This kind of start is too bad! In order to reverse this bad trend, it would be fine to draw a fortune and lift my spirits right!”

What he meant by losing his five yen, was just Maou accidentally bumping into the customer in front of them and dropping the other person’s money, and handing the five yen in his hands to the other party when he helped to pick the money up, it was just that kind of minor issue.

But Maou, who grumbled like a child, would probably not listen to such a calm analysis.

“.....Only once okay.”

Seeing no other alternative, with lenient feelings just like a mother, Ashiya agreed to let Maou draw fortunes.

“Alright! Watch! I will definitely get Very Good Luck!”

Even though Ashiya wished that his master would use that luck on the lucky draws in the shopping street, it was useless even if he said this to Maou who was happily walking towards the fortune sticks.

The current Ashiya could only pray that Maou would not feel depressed because he drew ‘Very Bad Luck’.

“What power spot.....I’m the one who’s getting my energy sucked away, seriously.....”

Emi complained as she completed her visit, and after leaving the queueing crowds, she took a deep breath in front of the shrine office which was selling talismans.

Even though she did not have to work today, it was not the way to stay at home on the first day of the new year.

Emi, who planned to look for ways to regain her holy magic while searching for the Demon King, first went to the famous power spot, Meiji Shrine.

Since it was a huge shrine, there would definitely be huge crowds gathering.

She had thought that this place would produce a little of that kind of energy, it ended up being a disappointment.

Getting no results after queuing for so long caused Emi to accumulate more fatigue.

However, in Eifuku where she lived, there was still another shrine, and it was built on a power spot known as the ‘navel of the capital’.

After making the trip with her remaining energy, Emi discovered that even

though it was a shrine with a long story, it felt like it did not contain any energy which resembled holy magic.

Emi, who went to popular new year shrine visit locations in one day, after walking around the place once, she stopped at a corner where a group of people were gathered around the fortune sticks, and exhaled forcefully.

“.....Fortune drawing huh.”

Emi did not dislike fortune telling.

When she was travelling in Ente Isla, she had received a lot of help from stargazers.

Of course this kind of fortune was different from the fortune telling Emi experienced before, these people did not do fortune telling as a profession, and were fortunes told based on spells and scientific basis.

“But since I’ve been walking for a long time, it’s a little irritating to have no results at all.”

Even though referring to fortune drawing as a result was a little strange, no matter what, she was currently in Japan.

It would not hurt to do something which fitted Japan’s New Year culture.

Emi took out a hundred yen from the merchandise of the mascot she liked, the Rilakkuma wallet, and stood in front of the fortune sticks.

“Wah.”

“Oh.”

“Ah.”

The numbers drawn by three different hands, led to the same fortune.

“This seems to be the first time I got it!”

Sasaki Chiho innocently felt happy because of this result.

“Hey, Ashiya! I succeeded! I succeeded!”

Maou Sadao’s excited state attracted the attention of everyone around him.

“Sigh, at least it doesn’t feel that bad.”

Yusa Emi showed a smile which showed some satisfaction and put the fortune into her bag.

The same fortune, revealed the fortune trends for the new year of three male and females who lived completely different lives.

Very Good Luck

Having not yet seen a new crystal	People gather, first assisting and holding each other	Purple clouds are exposed to the moonlight	Colours of spring rise in the mountains and rivers
Lost item: Will appear	Person one is waiting for: Will appear some time later	Trouble: Unhindered	Wish: Will come true
		Good things: Will happen continuously	Direction: East is good

The fate of drawing the 'Very Good Luck' fortune from the same fortune stick and brushing past each other during the New Year.

There was still some time before the starting of the storm which would involve two different worlds.

It would have to wait until after the arrival of Spring this year.



Author, Afterword –AND YOU–

The afterword this time will reveal some of the plot in this book.

Readers who start reading from the afterword, please take note of this.

Counting from the first volume of ‘Hataraku! Maou-sama’ from Dengeki Bunko, this book would be the twelfth book, but the name of this book is not ‘12’, but ‘0’.

When this book reaches everyone’s hands, it should already be after 10 September 2014, of course I will also do my best to deliver ‘Volume 12’ to everyone as quickly as I can.

‘Hataraku! Maou-sama tachi -a long time ago-’

The timeline for the beginning of the story should be slightly after the eleventh volume of the series. But the content talked about was of an era earlier than all the stories which have been revealed so far, it is a symbolic chapter of Volume 0.

He who had appeared in the fourth volume would also come here to play a main role with all his might.

When I was writing this story, I unexpectedly realized that when Ashiya was alone with Chiho, the common topic between them was only Maou.

Or more like, these two people were really too similar. The both of them were good at housework, have honest personalities, intelligent minds and are outstanding, and even the fact that every single day, their minds were filled with wanting to help Maou was the same, so this caused them to have nothing much to talk about instead.

It would feel that the timing was too late no matter what was talked about, and there was no need to discuss too much about the things regarding Maou, so the hardest part would be having Ashiya and Chiho talk to each other.

I hope that these characters, world and developments in ‘Hataraku! Maou-sama tachi’ which have never been written before would bring everyone enjoyment while reading this.

‘Hataraku! Yusha-sama tachi -a long time ago-’

It feels as if this title resembles a certain radio program.

When I was writing the first volume, the past of Emi and the others have been set up meticulously.

Names of cities which have not appeared before have appeared in this story, I hope that there will be a chance to write about this city again.

I think that all you serious supporters of Demon King must be discovered where the inspiration of this story comes from.

(T/N: For anyone who still hasn't understood where the inspiration is from, it's from episode 10 of the anime.)

Because I can write about the period of time where Olba was carrying out justice when he has been acting in an antagonist role since he appeared, it was a very happy story for me.

‘Demon and Hero and High School Girl ‘-A happy new year-’

Even though this is considered a short story series, two out of the three stories were new works, doing this kind of unreasonable thing in this Volume 0, this is the only story which has been published before.

After being published in ‘Dengeki Bunko MAGAZINE’, this story also took form as a drama CD which was included as a free gift in the first print of the second BD/DVD of the anime version of ‘Hataraku! Maou-sama’.

In this Volume 0, this is the story closest to the first volume.

It is a story describing ‘the people who meet in the future might have brushed past each other before in unexpected places?’

Even though, in a rare occurrence, the priority of three meals became very unimportant in this story, compared to the ones so far, the level of passion for life was shown the most in this volume.

And with the development of the story in the past timeline developing, perhaps there will be a chance not to see ‘0!’ but ‘ZERO!!’ in the future.

Because there is a past which connects with the future, there is a present which moves towards the unknown world in the future. This book gathers this kind of stories.

I hope that one day, I will be able to meet with everyone in the afterword in the future which cannot be seen now!



Credits

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